THE LIFE OF

ROBERT NELSON.

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OF THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF THE PIOUS

ROBERT NELSON.

I frequently attend the affairs
of our Society it is my order
to do all the little good I can

Y^r Humble Servant
Rob: Nelson

MEMOIRS

OF THE

LIFE AND TIMES

OF THE PIOUS

ROBERT NELSON,

AUTHOR OF THE "COMPANION TO THE FESTIVALS AND FASTS OF THE CHURCH."

BY REV. C. F. SECRETAN, M.A.,

INCUMBENT OF HOLY TRINITY, WESTMINSTER.

With Portrait.

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PREFACE.

THE preſent is the firſt attempt at an extended biography of the "pious" Robert Nelſon, (as he was commonly ſtyled by his cotemporaries,) ſince his deceaſe in 1714. A memoir, as is well known, was promiſed to the public * immediately after his death; his friend Dr. Francis Lee † having undertaken the taſk, going over his papers for that purpoſe with one of his executors, and being intruſted, it would ſeem, with a collection of letters written to him by different eminent perſons. Lee, however, died rather ſuddenly, Auguſt 23, 1719, at Gravelines, whither he had gone on buſineſs, having publiſhed no further account of Nelſon than what occurs in his "Life of Kettlewell." And the only contemporary memoir that appeared was a ſlight ſketch of Nelſon's Life and Writings, publiſhed by Curll, ‡

* The Poſtboy of Feb. 15, 1714, containing an announcement of Nelſon's "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality," adds "And for preventing any injury that may be done to the memory of ſo great a man, or to the publick, by any unfaithful, imperfect, and ſurreptitious accounts, the hiſtory of his life is undertaken by a friend ſufficiently inſtructed and furniſhed with materials for the ſame."

† Thoreſby's "Correſpondence," vol. iv., p. 300. "Dr. Lea, a phyſician, is preparing materials for Mr. Nelſon's Life; he has publiſhed Mr. Nelſon's 'Address to Perſons of Quality' upon the ſubject of religion."

‡ My only knowledge of this is from the accompanying advertiſement, the firſt of the two vols. (1715) being all I have ſeen:—

"The Works of the late Pious and Learned Robert Nelſon, Eſq.,

1315882

in an epitomiſed edition of his works. The notices ſupplied by Nicholls, in his "Anecdotes of Bowyer," and in his "Literary Anecdotes and Illuſtrations;" a careful ſketch of Nelſon's life in the "Biographia Britannica;" a very ſlight memoir prefixed to an edition of his "Chriſtian Sacrifice" in 1841, by the Rev. W. B. Hawkins; and a Life of Robert Nelſon, in Mr. Teale's "Lives of Engliſh Laymen" (1844), form the only attempts which have ſince been made to preſerve the memory of this devout, learned, laborious, and munificent member of our Church.

In addition to the above ſources of information, the following materials have been mployed in the preſent work:—

Four letters from Nelſon to John Johnſon, of Cranbrook; printed by Brett, in 1748.

Fifteen letters from Nelſon to Dr. Mapletoft, preſerved in the "European Magazine," vols. xv., xvi.

Sixteen letters from Nelſon to Dr. Charlett, from the Ballard MSS. in the Bodleian; four of which have been previouſly publiſhed by Aubrey.

Thirty-ſix letters and ſhort notes from Nelſon to Wanley, from the Harleian MSS. in the Britiſh Muſeum; in great part printed by Mr. Teale.

containing the following Treatiſes:—I. The Whole Duty of a Chriſtian. II. The Practice of true Devotion, in relation to the End, as well as the Means of Religion. III. A Letter to a Roman Prieſt concerning the pretended miracles and infallibility of their Church. IV. The great Duty of frequenting the Chriſtian Sacrifice, and the Nature of the Preparation required, with ſuitable Devotions. V. The Life and Character of Biſhop Bull. VI. An Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate, concerning the different methods of doing good. VII. A Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England. VIII. Some Account of Mr. Nelſon's Life and Writings; with a true copy of his Laſt Will and Teſtament. Alſo his Character, by Dr. Marſhall. The whole compendiouſly methodiſed for the uſe of families. Two volumes. Price 6*s*."

One letter from Nelſon to Archbiſhop Sharp, from the Miſcellaneous Papers of Dr. Birch, in the Britiſh Muſeum.

Two letters from Nelſon to Hilkiah Bedford, from the Rawlinſon MSS. in the Bodleian.

Lord Melfort's Correſpondence with Nelſon, from the Lanſdowne MSS. in the Britiſh Muſeum.

I have alſo to expreſs my acknowledgments and thanks

To J. H. Markland, Eſq., D.C.L., for the communication of two letters from Nelſon to the firſt Schoolmaſter of the Blue-coat School, Bath, and for other proofs of kindly intereſt in the preſent work;

To the Right Honourable Lord Malmeſbury, for acceſs to the letters of the Levant Company, in the Library of the Foreign Office, which have ſupplied ſeveral particulars reſpecting Nelſon's family;

To the Rev. T. B. Murray and the Rev. E. Hawkins, for ready acceſs to the Journals of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, and the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel, of both of which Nelſon was an early and zealous member;

To the Rev. J. B. Deane, Rector of St. Martin's, Outwich;

To the Rev. Robert Gibſon, Rector of St. Mary Abchurch, and St. Laurence Pountney;

To the Rev. Thos. Maurice, Vicar of Driffield, in the county of Glouceſter;

To the Rev. H. W. Hickes, Rector of Cranford, Middleſex; and

To the Rev. John Back, Rector of St. George the Martyr, Queen Square, for obliging tranſcripts

from, or for ready acceſs to, the regiſters of their reſpective pariſhes.

From theſe and other ſources it is hoped that a biography of Robert Nelſon has now been produced, ſufficiently extended to do juſtice to the memory and example of one whoſe name is a houſehold word with thouſands among us who yet know nothing more of him than the name; but whoſe orthodox teaching and charitable labours and ſober piety, in a latitudinarian age, and amid all the bitterneſs of religious partiſanſhip, are admirably calculated to ſupply a pattern and encouragement to ourſelves, amid ſimilar trials at the preſent day.

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PIOUS ROBERT NELSON,

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THE Pious Robert Nelſon was born June 22nd, and baptized July 8th, 1656, at a time when the church of which he was deſigned to prove ſo bright an ornament and ſo able a member was lying helpleſs and in diſgrace under the iron hand of Cromwell. When our Zion was at her loweſt, God was raiſing up a reſtorer of her deſolate places; and in the competence which Robert Nelſon inherited from his infancy, in the ſtill richer inheritance of his parents' piety, and in the ſingular excellence of diſpoſition with which he was gifted, we may diſcern traces of that Providence which was preparing him to become the promoter of true religion, and an example of charity and goodneſs.

He was the ſon of Mr. John Nelſon, a wealthy Turkey merchant of the city of London, by Delicia, the daughter of Captain Lewis Roberts, alſo an eminent trader to the Levant.

Mr. John Nelſon ſeems to have ſprung from a family of humble condition in Suffolk, and to have acquired a conſiderable fortune during a reſidence at Aleppo. We find him a leading merchant there, and acting as treaſurer of the Levant Company in their factory on the ſpot, in 1645. In 1651 he had ſettled in London, and in his place at the Board of the Levant Company was intereſting himſelf to ſend out as chaplain to his friends at Aleppo, Mr. Robert Frampton, better known in after years as the nonjuring biſhop of Glouceſter.* And this prepares us for the diſtaſte he expreſſes in his will for the intruding miniſtry of the time, and for his requeſt to be "privately buried by an orthodox miniſter in the evening."† His reſidence was in Suffolk Lane, and he was interred accordingly (Sept. 14, 1657)

* The future biographer of Biſhop Frampton may be glad of an extract from the Letters of the Levant Company reſpecting him:—"1655, Sept. 17. To Conſul at Aleppo—As for a Miniſter, we have now at laſt (after much trouble and ſolicitude herein) fixed upon a perſon in whom we are confident you will think yourſelves well ſatisfied, one Mr. Frampton, who, as he came recommended to us with extraordinary characters of worth from others, ſo himſelf hath ſince given us very ſufficient teſtimony of his merits, in reſpect whereof we have advanced his ſalary to dollars 400 per annum." "Nov. 18. To the ſame.—Who being to take his paſſage upon the Golden Fleece, now ready to depart, we are willing to accompany him with this our ſecond recommendation, and can do no leſs than make this addition to the character you have already received, that the more experience we have had of him, the better we are ſatisfied with our choice, and are the more confident of your contentment and happineſs under his miniſtry. He brings thither with him the ſeveral books mentioned in the encloſed liſt, which (upon notice of your great want) have been provided by the company's order, and at their charge, and are to remain there for the uſe of him and of ſucceeding miniſters."—Signed by John Nelſon and others.

† So of Sir Thomas Abdy, we are told "He was buried at 10 of the clock at night, it being the hour he uſually went to bed, and he appointing by his will that his executors ſhould put him into his grave at the time that mortals go to their reſt." Autobiography of Sir John Bramſton, p. 220.

in the pariſh church of St. Laurence Pountney, where he had already buried his eldeſt child John.*

His wife Delicia—Delitiæ, her more ſcholarly ſon preferred to ſpell it—was the daughter of Captain Lewis Roberts, who had come to London from Beaumaris in Angleſea, and was for many years an active member of the Levant Company, as well as the author of ſeveral works on trade.† He was buried March 12, 1640, in a vault which he had purchaſed beneath the church of St. Martin's Outwich, Biſhopſgate, where his daughter, Delicia Nelſon, with other members of his family, was afterwards laid. She had herſelf requeſted in her will to be buried

"Either in St. Laurence Pountney churchyard, in which church before it was burnt down, lay interred the body of my dear huſband and my eldeſt ſon John, or in St. Martin's Outwich, where my dear mother lies interred."

In another clauſe, ſhe bequeaths to Ann Lordell, her niece "my Teſtament which was my mother's, which I uſually read in." And ſlender as theſe materials are, they are yet ſufficient to indicate the character of Robert Nelſon's mother, and enable us to judge of the piety and affection with which ſhe trained the childhood of her "dear and loving ſon," as ſhe calls him.

Of the three children of this marriage, John, Robert,

* Extracts from the Regiſter of St. Laurence Pountney :—

"Chriſtenings. Robert, the ſonne of John Nelſon, merchant, and Delicia, his wife, July 8th, 1656.

Gabriell, the ſonne of John Nelſon, merchant, and Delicia, his wife, borne the 17th of July, and baptized the 29th, 1657."

"Burials. July the 26th, 1656. John, the ſonne of John Nelſon, marchant, and Delicia, his wife.

Sept. the 14th, 1657. Mr. John Nelſon, marchant."

† "The Merchant's Map of Commerce," 1638. A Poetical Teſtimony is prefixed by Iſaac Walton. This work, a large folio, reached a 4th edition in 1700.

"Warfare Epitomized." 1640.

"The Treaſure of Traffic. Dedicated to the High Court of Parliament now aſſembled." 1641.

A Poem by Lewis Roberts is alſo prefixed to Fletcher's "Purple Iſland," 1633.

and Gabriel, Robert was the only one who ſurvived his infancy, and, being but two years old at his father's death, was brought up under the joint guardianſhip of his mother, and her brother, Mr. Gabriel Roberts, afterwards knighted. Of his boyhood we have no further account, than that he was a moſt beautiful child, that he ſhewed a ſtrength and vivacity of underſtanding beyond his years, and for the ſweetneſs of his diſpoſition was exceedingly beloved by everyone. Sir Gabriel Roberts, who had no ſon of his own, was extremely fond of him, and uncle and nephew ſeem always to have retained the warmeſt attachment for each other. He received his earlieſt education at St. Paul's School, in the city of London, where he contracted a ſchool-boy friendſhip with Edmund Halley the mathematician, who, nearly fifty years after, could affectionately acknowledge "the uninterrupted courſe of friendſhip, which has always ſubſiſted between us ever ſince our childhood."* From St. Paul's School, however, he was ſoon removed by the affection of his mother to the village of Dryfield, near Cirenceſter, where ſhe took up her abode with her ſiſter Ann, the wife of George Hanger, Eſq., formerly a Levant merchant at Smyrna, and an intimate of Nelſon's father in London, but now ſettled on his paternal eſtate of Dryfield, or Driffield, in Glouceſterſhire.

Robert Nelſon's removal to Dryfield forms a providential æra in his life. Dr. George Bull, the learned author of the "Defenſio Fidei Nicenæ" ſo highly praiſed by Boſſuet, afterwards biſhop of St. David's, was then rector of the neighbouring pariſh of St. Peter with St. Mary Siddington, and to this able and orthodox inſtructor Mrs. Nelſon now committed the education of her ſon. To Biſhop Bull's inſtructions Robert Nelſon owed whatever learning he

* A letter to Robert Nelſon, Eſq., at the end of Brokeſby's "Life of Dodwell." Lond. 1715. 8vo.

poſſeſſed; for though his name* was afterwards entered at Trinity College, Cambridge, he ſeems never to have gone into reſidence or to have proſecuted his ſtudies at the Univerſity. To the influence of Bull's teaching we muſt likewiſe aſcribe the reſpect for primitive antiquity and for church authority which diſtinguiſhes Nelſon's writings. In the family of his uncle, in London, he might have contracted a very different theological bias: Sir Gabriel's daughters married into diſſenting families;† Tillotſon, who was now preaching before crowded city congregations at St. Lawrence Jewry, was his favourite divine; and Dr. Kidder, the latitudinarian ſucceſſor of Biſhop Ken, was rector of his pariſh church of St. Martin's Outwich. Tillotſon had early taken notice of Nelſon; the goodneſs of heart which diſtinguiſhed each of them would naturally generate a mutual eſteem, and in ſpite of their diſparity of years, they ſoon contracted a friendſhip of unuſual warmth. And that, notwithſtanding ſuch perſonal attachment to the great preacher of latitudinarian religion, Nelſon ſhould have formed theological opinions of ſo oppoſite a complexion, can only be attributed to the influence of Biſhop Bull, to whom (among many other obligations) the Church of England owes it that his young pupil grew up a Robert Nelſon inſtead of merely a Robert Boyle, an earneſt and attached churchman, as well as a pious and charitable Chriſtian. To his early tutor's memory Nelſon has left a worthy tribute in his "Life and Hiſtory of thoſe Controverſies in which he

* His name appears at the end of the liſt of Penſioners, and at the head of the Fellow Commoners admitted in 1678. Coles MSS. Brit. Mus. vol. xiv. p. 330.

† Dorcas Roberts married Sir John Fryer, who was Lord Mayor in 1721, and to whom ſhe bore twins that ſame year, Gabriel and Delicia, who were baptized by a diſſenting miniſter. Delicia Roberts, named after Nelſon's mother, was married firſt to Philip Wolff, Esq., ſecondly to Alderman Deacle, M.P. for Eveſham, thirdly to Rev. Obadiah Hughes, D.D., an eminent diſſenting preacher.

was engaged;" a work which he undertook at the requeſt of the biſhop's ſon, and which (he could not but confeſs) no one was better qualified to execute.

"For I had maintained," he writes, "a long and intimate friendſhip with his lordſhip, which gave me an opportunity of being acquainted with his ſolid and ſubſtantial worth; I had frequently ſat at his feet as he was a preacher, and as often felt the force of thoſe diſtinguiſhing talents which enabled him to ſhine in the pulpit; but, above all, I had preſerved a grateful remembrance of thoſe advantages which I had received from him in my education, part of which was committed to his care and direction."

Nelſon was ſtill reſiding with his mother at Dryfield, in 1678, at the cloſe of which year we find their names recorded in the pariſh regiſter* as contributors to the brief for rebuilding St. Paul's Cathedral; and an equally characteriſtic memento of his connection with the place is to be found in a ſervice of communion plate, ſtill in ordinary uſe at the church, conſiſting of a paten, flagon, and chalice, each of which bears the inſcription—

"The gift of Robert Nelſon, Eſq., who departed this life the 16th of January, 1714. Declared in his laſt will and teſtament to be for y^e^ uſe of y^e^ Church of Dryfield, in y^e^ county of Glouceſter."

The Hangers of Driffield became extinct in the year 1824; their manſion had been previouſly demoliſhed, the timber cut down and ſold, and the eſtate diſſipated by the two laſt heads of the family, William and George Hanger, Lords Coleraine, and the only intereſt now attaching to the

* Extract from Regiſter of Driffield. "Contributions at Driffield, given to the Briefe for y^e^ repairs of St. Paul's Church in London, Octob. 13, 1678:

Geo. Hanger, Eſq^re^, a Guynny . .	1*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*
Mrs. Anne Hanger, his wife . . .	0*l.* 10*s.* 0*d.*
Mrs. Delicia Nelſon, widow, of Lond^n^, a Guynny	1*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*
Mr. Rob. Nelſon, a Londoner, her ſon, a Guynny	1*l.* 1*s.* 6*d.*"

(and ſeven others.)

ſecluded village is owing to the memorials that it contains of Robert Nelſon's youth.

The attainments which he here acquired under Bull's tuition, and the character which was now beginning to form in him, are exhibited in two letters, which about this time he took occaſion to addreſs to another early friend, Dr. Mapletoft, upon the news of his marriage. Dr. Mapletoft was an eminent phyſician of the day, profeſſor of phyſic at Greſham College, and the intimate acquaintance of Sydenham, whoſe works he edited. To Robert Nelſon he would be attracted, not ſo much by any ſimilarity of ſcientific purſuits, as by that kindly eſteem which a good man would feel towards a pure and pious youth. His own earneſtneſs in religion (owing, doubtleſs, in part, to his early education in the family of his great uncle and godfather, Nicholas Farrar, at Gidding,) induced him, a few years later, to retire from the practice of phyſic, and to ſeek the holy orders of the church. He obtained the living of St. Lawrence Jewry, in 1685, and devoted himſelf moſt aſſiduouſly to the duties of his pariſh, providing every houſehold with a collection of ſuitable books of devotion, in his liſt of which appears Nelſon's "Exhortation to Houſekeepers to ſet up the worſhip of God in their Families." He took a leading part in the early deliberations of the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel in Foreign Parts, in the promotion of Dr. Bray's deſigns, and in the other charitable endeavours of the time. With Robert Nelſon—who ſeems never to have loſt a friend he once poſſeſſed—he always maintained a cloſe and frequent correſpondence; and the two letters to him which follow have an eſpecial intereſt, as the earlieſt productions of his young friend's pen, although the ſtiff and laboured congratulations which they contain form but a poor introduction to the natural expreſſions and plain good ſenſe of Nelſon's later letters.

London, the 12 Dec. 1679.*

"Dear and Honoured Sir,—As ſoon as I came to town, which was about ten days ago, I made a ſtrict inquiry concerning your welfare, which I counted myſelf not a little concerned in, by reaſon your many favours and obligations, beſides the juſt value of your perſon, have engaged me to a particular reſpect and eſteem for yourſelf, ſo that my own happineſs will be much increaſed by any addition to your ſatisfaction. I was ſoon informed of the alteration of your condition, and that you had made the grand experiment of human life, which ſeldom admits of any mean, but carries us to the utmoſt boundaries of happineſs or miſery; and being well ſatisfied that your great prudence would ſecure the former of the two extremes—for *nullum numen abeſt, ſi ſit prudentia*—I thought it no ways diſagreeable to congratulate your preſent enjoyment. Nay friendſhip and affection obliged me to expreſs my juſt reſentment, and be aſſured that the news of your great felicity under your preſent circumſtances finds a welcome reception from no one more than from myſelf, the only reaſon that forbids my regret for your abſence here in town. I heartily wiſh thoſe ideas and notions you framed of matrimony may be exceeded in the poſſeſſion, that propriety and enjoyment may whetten the edge of your affections, and that no part of your happineſs may leave you now it ceaſes to be imaginary. And though Thales, who was a wiſe man, would ſeem to inſinuate as if marriage was never convenient for the wiſe; yet, as Alex. ab Alex. obſerves well, '*licèt hâc ambage verborum ſapienti nunquam uxorem ducendam demonſtraret, veruntamen qui hæc propenſo judicio explorare vult, profecto in conjugiis multa inveniet commoda uſui vitæ neceſſaria, ſine quibus vix homini ſapienti cælibem vitam ducere expediat*," &c. Nay all nations have honoured thoſe that are married, and puniſhed Celibacy. Even the Utopians, that ſeemed to have the moſt refined and abſtracted notions of things, would have thoſe that lived ſingle puniſhed, as uſeleſs in a commonwealth. The creation of the world

* *European Magazine*, Vol. xv., pp. 11, 12.

would be to little purpoſe without it, for *humano generi immortalitatem tribuit;* and therefore *indigne vivit per quem non vivit et alter:* nay it is the opinion of ſome, that it is impoſſible to be ſaved without it.—It would be endleſs to proſecute all the arguments, and enumerate all the authorities in its behalf; though I am ſenſible there has a great deal been ſaid on the other ſide. However, if it conſiſted with my intereſt and conveniency, and the object gratified my inclinations, it is not the rant and ſatyre of a Poet, or the declamation of an Orator, that ſhould prevail ſo far as to make me ſuſpend the execution of that, for which my motives were ſo ſpecious and plauſible. But for all my zeal I am ſtill *mei juris* free as ever, and have yet no proſpect of being otherwaies; and ſhall alwayes pray that all the advantages of your condition may center in your match; that you may be long happy in the embraces of an excellent wife, bleſſed with a proſperous offspring, which may inherit your virtues as well as eſtate, and then all other inconveniences may be well diſpenſed with. As to news, what we now moſt talk of, is the prorogation of the Parliament till the 11th of Nov. with a proviſo that the King may call them ſooner if he pleaſes. It is their petitioning has enraged him, and he ſwears by God they may knock out his brains, but ſhall never cut off his head. For all this, they ſay they will ſtill go on in getting ſubſcriptions: the conſequence I am afraid may be bad. I cannot enlarge becauſe Mrs. Firmin ſends for my letter, and ſays, it will be too late, if it does not go preſently. My humble ſervice to your Lady, Mr. Dent, and my Lady Brograve and all the good company, and be aſſured that I am

"Your obliged humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson.

"All your devout friends are much your ſervants.

"My mother preſents her humble ſervice to you and your Lady.

"To my worthy friend the much honoured Dr. Mapletoft, att Hamwelly, in Hartfordſhire."

London, 2d January, 1679.

"Worthy Sir,—I am very ſenſible that the true ground and reaſon of moſt of the diſappointments many men meet with in the grand tranſactions of their lives, proceeds not ſoe much from the nature of things themſelves, as from thoſe extravagant conceptions they form of them; and that the chiefeſt ingredient of their unhappineſs is the falſe opinion they have entertained of ſublunary enjoyments, whereby their expectations are raiſed to ſo high a pitch, that as 'tis not in the capacity of things to gratify, ſo they were never deſigned for that purpoſe; which gave occaſion to that noble ſaying of Epictetus, *homines perturbantur non rebus, ſed ijs quas de rebus habent opinionibus;* and to that of Seneca to the ſame ſenſe, *ſæpius opinione quàm re laboramus.* Now, a wiſe man, that takes a true eſtimate of all thoſe things which make the greateſt figure in the world, will never promiſe himſelf complete ſatisfaction, becauſe they are not the adequate objects of his deſires. He knows that the beſt ſtate of things here has a great mixture, and he is the happy man whoſe condition admits of the leaſt inconveniency, a total exemption being no wiſe the privilege of human nature. And hereupon I could lay a ſure foundation for your happineſs, ſince thoſe notions I have obſerved you to entertain, will never tend to diminiſh it. Beſides, your preſent circumſtances muſt greatly enhance it; for according to the Italians (for whoſe acquaintance I muſt always acknowledge myſelf debtor to yourſelf) *ſenza moglie al lato, l'huomo non è beato.** Sir, I was lately to wait upon Madam Houblon, who made ſtrict enquirys after you. Your letter enabled me to give her full ſatisfaction in all points; tho', ſhe ſayes, ſhe reckons you ſo diſcreet a perſon, that now you are married, you'll never complain of any inconveniencies, but make the beſt of a bad market. However, I look upon this as meaſuring other people's corn by our own buſhell, imagining our ſentiments muſt be the rule for others to ſteer by; notwithſtanding, I was ſo far obliged as to be eſteemed among your friends and acquaintance,

* Dr. Mapletoft publiſhed (in 1707) a collection of "Select Proverbs, Italian, Spaniſh, French, Engliſh, Scotch, &c., chiefly moral."

which is no ſmall addition to my own character. According to the company men keep in town, you well know we have our apprehenſions of public affairs. In ſome places we are told, the petition for the parliament's ſetting goes on, and that 'tis countenanced by men of credit and reputation: in another place, you ſhall hear it expoſed, and confidently affirmed, that none but the raſcality and fanaticks are engaged in it. I heard from pretty good hands yeſterday, that the parliament would be diſſolved before the 26th January; 'tis hoped, in order to call a new one. We expect the Duke of York here in ten days: the deſign of his ſudden return is not known. We talk mightily of a letter the Prince of Orange has ſent to the King; ſome ſay, to perſuade him to a ſtrict alliance with Holland; others, to forewarn him of the deſigns of the Monſieur againſt him, who has, 'tis ſaid, drawn down many of his men to Dunkirk and Calice; but I think every ſpring of late years has afforded us diſcourſe of a French invaſion. Your friend and ſchoolfellow, Mr. Dryden, has been ſeverely beatten, for being the ſuppoſed author of a late very abuſive lampoon. There has been a good ſum of money offered to find who ſet them on work: 'tis ſaid, they received their orders from the Ducheſs of Portſmouth, who is concerned in the lampoone. My humble ſervice pray to your lady, who I am glad to hear thrives ſo bravely, as to give hopes of an *hans en kelder* *; the like to the reſt of the good company; and be aſſured that I am

"Your obliged humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson.

"My mother's ſervice attends you and your lady.

"To the worthy Dr. Mapletoft, att
Hamels, in Hartfordſhire."

Nelſon's acquaintance with Dr. Mapletoft may have introduced him to the diſtinguiſhed men of ſcience, who, as members of the Royal Society, now held their weekly meetings at Greſham College, in the city, and who elected

* Literally, Jack in the cellar; a humorous expreſſion of the day for *infans in utero*.

him into their body on April 1, 1680.* That, at the age of twenty-four years, he ſhould have ſought admiſſion into the Royal Society, would imply an early intereſt in natural ſcience which he hardly ſeems to have retained in after life, when the more congenial labours of the religious ſocieties of the day engaged all his ſympathy and leiſure. The Minutes of the Royal Society do not exhibit him as a very frequent attendant at its meetings, or as taking any perſonal part in its debates; and we may infer a little indifference to its objects when we find him noted (together with his ſtepſon, Sir Berkeley Lucy, and his old friend Dr. Mapletoft) as a defaulter in his weekly contributions, and ſummoned to pay up the ſubſcription which he had ſuffered to fall into arrear.† And it was probably as a tribute of reſpect to his character and poſition, rather than to his ſcientific attainments, that, at a later period of his life, he was appointed, in company with Sloane and Halley, on the Council of the Society.

In the year 1680, alſo, commences Nelſon's correſpondence with Tillotſon, for our acquaintance with which we are indebted to the fragments of the letters which have been preſerved by Birch in his life of the archbiſhop. Thus, in July of this year, we find Tillotſon writing to his young friend, (who had recently been viſiting him at his deanery at Canterbury,) in vindication of a haſty and ill-adviſed ſermon that he had preached in April at Whitehall before the Court. In this diſcourſe Tillotſon had puſhed his principle of latitude in matters of doctrine to an extreme that no honeſt faith in revelation could tolerate, and he had ventured on the extraordinary poſition, that no man, (unleſs miraculouſly commiſſioned) had a right to propagate his religious convictions without the conſent of the

* Birch's "Hiſtory of the Royal Society," vol. iv. p. 32.

† "Minutes of the Royal Society, 1699-1712." MSS. Brit. Mus. 3342.

civil magiſtrate. Such an expreſſion of indifference to all religious truth raiſed a ſtorm of ridicule and indignation. "Sir, ſir," exclaimed a courtier to the king, "do you hear Mr. Hobbes in the pulpit?" Hickes poured out his invective againſt ſuch a betrayer of the Faith. Patrick was in conſternation at ſuch ſentiments from his friend: "It is plain that he was not awake, nor had his wits about him when he wrote it." Howe offered his animadverſions on behalf of the diſſenters. And we cannot wonder that Nelſon ſhould have expreſſed himſelf concerned at ſuch opinions proceeding from one whom he reſpected and eſteemed, while Tillotſon faintly attempts to excuſe himſelf in reply. In the following month of Auguſt we find them correſponding on a ſubject where they were ſurer of mutual ſympathy, viz., the remarkable converſion of the Earl of Rocheſter, afterwards recorded by Burnet. A few days later Nelſon joins his uncle, Sir Gabriel Roberts, in aſking Tillotſon's intereſt to procure the rectory of Barnes, in Surrey, for their friend Dr. Kidder; and Tillotſon owns the force with which the recommendation comes to him from his young friend, "as of all men moſt likely to command me in anything you ſhould deſire:"* while later in the year again, the differing tendency of their minds upon matters of religion betrays itſelf in the inquiries that Nelſon makes, reſpecting the dean's rumoured demolition of ſome architectural ornaments in his cathedral; in reply to which Tillotſon writes back to his friend at Dryfield, that he

> "Only took down the ſun over the ſkreen behind the communion-table, which was done with ſo little noiſe that ſeveral days paſſed before it was taken notice of to be removed; and nothing done beſides, not ſo much as the table ſtirred out of its place."†

Nelſon's viſit to his mother at Dryfield ſeems to have

* Birch, p. 53. † *Idem*, p. 77.

been preparatory to the tour he was about making on the Continent, in company with his old ſchoolfellow Edmund Halley.* Halley was a few months younger than his friend, but had already raiſed himſelf to diſtinction among the aſtronomers of the day. When but twenty years of age, he had been ſent by Charles II. to St. Helena, in order to perfect a catalogue of fixed ſtars in the Southern hemiſphere. He had juſt returned from a ſcientific miſſion to Dantzic, whither he had been ſent at the inſtance of the Royal Society; and he was now proceeding to France and Italy, in order to communicate with the aſtronomers of the Continent. The two friends quitted England at the cloſe of 1680, and on their journey, between Calais and Paris, obtained their firſt view of the celebrated comet, upon which Halley founded his cometary theory. It furniſhed matter for correſpondence between Nelſon and Tillotſon, who ſtill continued a frequent interchange of letters; the dean taking advantage of his young friend's arrival amid the temptations of Pariſian life, in order to expreſs in the warmeſt of terms his confidence and eſteem:

"If I am able, I need not to adviſe you in anything, ſo well am I aſſured of your virtue and good conduct. I pray for you continually, that God would preſerve you, and return you ſafe and the ſame to us, and give you all the advantages you expected, and will, I am ſure, endeavour to make by your travels. I never know how to part from you, but my buſineſs calls me off."

Tillotſon's commendation of Nelſon's youthful principles takes off the air of eulogium from ſome verſes of an admirer, who thus deſcribes his early piety and goodneſs:†

* Biograph. Britan. art. Halley.

† From "A Poem in Memory of Robert Nelſon, Eſq. Daphnin ad aſtra feremus, amavit nos quoque Daphnis." 1715.

"Happy the man, whom Heaven did ſo compoſe
That every Virtue from his temper flows;
So juſt the frame, he wants not Reaſon's art
To win the paſſions, nor to warm the heart;
Through heedleſs youth by happy impulſe goes,
And loves the Virtue that not yet he knows."

Nelſon's principles were now about to receive their earlieſt trial. He had carried with him to Paris a letter of introduction to Henry Savile, the Engliſh envoy, which Tillotſon had procured for him from the Earl of Halifax, Savile's brother. Lord Halifax writes, November $\frac{15}{25}$, 1680:*

"I am deſired by my very good friend the Dean of Canterbury, to recommend this gentleman, Mr. Nelſon, to your kind reception, which as you give it by your place to everyone that ſpeaketh Engliſh, ſo I am ſure you will not refuſe it more particularly to him, that he may join with all our other travellers in your praiſes for an affable miniſter."

The publiſhed correſpondence between Halifax and his brother yields but a poor impreſſion of Henry Savile's character, as that of a place-hunting courtier, dubious in his morals and mercenary in his dealings. And it was probably ſome ſelfiſh intereſt of his own, rather than the eſteem he affected for Nelſon's character, which prompted a propoſal for purchaſing a place at Court, which he ſhortly made to his new acquaintance. It was in April, 1681, that Nelſon, being ſtill at Paris, received from Savile, then on a viſit to London, a propoſition which, if accepted, would have expoſed his early manhood to all the corruption of Charles the Second's Court, which might have given an entirely different complexion to all his after life, and (combining with his perſonal attachment to the royal family) might have changed the earneſt and munificent Churchman into the mere intriguing Jacobite

* "Savile Correſpondence," printed for the Camden Society, 1858, p. 168.

politician. And the offer was not without temptation to one whoſe perſon and fortune and accompliſhments peculiarly fitted him to ſhine amid the gaieties of a Court, and whoſe only foible, it has been ſaid,* was his fondneſs for richneſs of dreſs and diſtinction of perſonal appearance. Nelſon himſelf ſeemed inclined to take the propoſal into conſideration, but dutifully referred it to the maturer judgment of his friends at home, who made Tillotſon their ſpokeſman on the occaſion. He writes from London, on the 28th of April, as follows:†

"But now to the main buſineſs, to which I find your Uncle ſo abſolutely averſe, that he did not think fit your Mother ſhould be acquainted with it. It is well, if you eſcape chiding from him. As for myſelf, than whom no perſon in the world can wiſh you better, ſince you are pleaſed to repoſe that kind confidence in me, as to aſk my advice, I will faithfully give it. In the preſent uncertainty of things, I would not have you venture ſo conſiderable a ſum, as thoſe places go at; and unleſs *ſomebody* grow better, which I hope God will grant, the temptations, to which a man muſt be expoſed in that ſtation, are like to be ſo violent, as would ſet the firmeſt virtue hard, even my friend's, of whom I have ſo good an opinion. Your Mother hath but juſt maſtered the trouble of your abſence, which, I underſtand by your Aunt Hanger, was for a great while very grievous to her; and therefore you will, I am ſure, be very tender of giving any new occaſion. I will wait upon Mr. Savile, and make the beſt acknowledgements I can of his great civilities and favours to you, and let him know how your friends ſtand affected in this matter, to whoſe judgement and determination you have referred it."

And in the next letter of the dean, addreſſed to Nelſon at Saumur, on the 2nd of June, 1681, he thus continues the ſubject:‡

"I wiſh your good opinion of my judgement were as well grounded, as that of my ſincere friendſhip and

* Seward's "Anecdotes," ii. 90. † Birch, p. 84. ‡ *Idem*, p. 85.

affection for you moſt certainly is. Your mother is perfectly well ſatisfied, as I told her ſhe had great reaſon, ſince you referred yourſelf to the advice and judgment of your friends; by which I aſſured her you would moſt certainly govern your reſolution. I ſhall be glad to ſee England ſo happy, as that the Court may be a fit place for you to live in. I waited on the embaſſador, and made the beſt acknowledgements to him I could of his great favours and civilities to you, and particularly in that kind offer he had made you. But I told him that your friends had no mind to it, eſpecially as things now are; and I knew you would do nothing againſt their inclination; with which he was well ſatisfied, declaring the very great kindneſs and eſteem he had for you and for your friend Mr. Halley, in which I did not contradict him."

It was with a remembrance ſurely of his own temptation and danger at this period of his life, that Nelſon, amid his meditations for All-Saints' day, wrote the following paragraph of advice as to the choice of our company.

"It concerns all good Chriſtians to take care in this point; for the contagion of vice is powerful, and their greateſt ſecurity is in ſtanding at a diſtance from it; the frailty of virtue is great, therefore all cautions ſhould be uſed not to expoſe it to an infectious air. But young men, when they firſt appear in the world, ought to have a particular regard to it, their future happineſs, both temporal and eternal, depending ſo much upon the qualifications of thoſe they converſe with. Though they have received good principles in their education, yet they want practice to confirm the habits of virtue and courage, to reſiſt the allurements of vice. They are apt to catch at any thing that indulges and countenances their irregular appetites. The misfortune is, when they want prudence moſt, they have leaſt of it; therefore it is happy when they will liſten to the advice of their parents, or ſome experienced relation, who is able to direct them in an affair of ſuch conſequence."

Relinquiſhing his thoughts of Court life in England, Nelſon now proceeded from Saumur, on his travels to

Lyons and Rome, at which latter place he parted company with his friend Halley, who now returned to England. His own ſtay at home is remarkable, as procuring him the acquaintance of Lady Theophila Lucy, (widow of Sir Kingſmill Lucy, of Broxbourne, Bart., and daughter of George, the firſt earl of Berkeley,) who is ſaid to have become ſo violently enamoured of his perſon that ſhe could not forbear expreſſing her affection for him, and who in the following year became his wife. They returned to England in company, in Auguſt, 1682, Nelſon proceeding to his mother at Dryfield, and paying a paſſing viſit on his road to his faithful friend at Canterbury, Lady Lucy going to her father's ſeat of Durdans, near Epſom.

It was but two days after her arrival, (Auguſt 20, 1682,) that the honor of the Berkeley family was ſhamefully outraged by the abduction of her younger ſiſter, Henrietta, then but eighteen years old, by the Lord Grey of Warke, who was himſelf married to another ſiſter, the Lady Mary. Lady Lucy haſtened after her ſiſter's ſeducer to Guildford, and in vain endeavoured to recover her to her family; and on the melancholy trial* which followed in the ſubſequent November, ſhe was the only member of it who ſeemed to be able to ſpeak at once with ſelf-poſſeſſion and ſpirit. Her endeavours were unſucceſsful to retrieve the character of her ſiſter; nor did happier reſults follow from a moſt earneſt letter of remonſtrance which Tillotſon addreſſed to Lady Henrietta, and which Nelſon, from reſpect to his friend, whoſe epiſtolary talent he greatly admired, or from ſympathy with the family with which he was about to be allied, was at the pains of tranſcribing for himſelf.

His own marriage with Lady Lucy was deferred till after the trial of Lord Grey for the offence, November 23,

* State Trials, vol. ix. p. 290.

1682, and may poſſibly have taken place with a privacy of which the melancholy circumſtances of the Berkeley family would afford ſufficient explanation. There is no reaſon to ſuppoſe but that their union received the approval of their friends on either ſide, and, as far as fortune and poſition were concerned, it was a ſufficiently ſuitable alliance. If Nelſon was but of plebeian extraction, Lord Berkeley had himſelf married the daughter of a London merchant; Lady Lucy had an ample ſettlement, and Nelſon's fortune ſeems always to have been conſiderable, his father having left him in his infancy a houſe and land at Cretingham in Suffolk, with £3000 in money, to which muſt be added a ſhare in the reſidue of the paternal eſtate, and the ſucceſſion to his younger brother Gabriel's inheritance, beſides the natural accumulations of his own minority. A ſuppoſed diſparity of years between Nelſon and his wife is a matter which has been thought more open to exception. "She was old when he married her," is the blunt account of an early biographer.* She had borne three children to her former huſband, and her ſon, Sir Berkeley Lucy, was now twelve years old;† yet ſhe is ſtated to have been only about twenty-eight at the time of her ſecond marriage, in the affidavit made on the occaſion by Sir Gabriel Roberts,‡ while Robert Nelſon was now twenty-ſix years of age. So ſmall a difference in their ages was not likely to prove a bar to the happineſs of their married life. Nelſon watched over his wife's declining health, with conſcientious and

* Anecdotes of Bowyer, p. 3.

† Gent. Mag. xxix. p. 551. "1759. Nov. 19. Ob. Sir Berkeley Lucy, aged 87."

‡ March 24th, 1682-3. Sir Gabriel prays for licence of marriage in St. Laurence Jewry. No entry of the marriage however is to be found in the Regiſter of that Church, nor yet in that of St. John's, Clerkenwell, where Lord Berkeley's town houſe was ſituated, or in that of Cranford, Middleſex, to which ſeat he removed after the diſgrace which had fallen on his family at Durdans. The Regiſter of Epſom Pariſh (in which Durdans is ſituated) does not go back beyond 1694.

unwearied attention,* during an union of three-and-twenty years. His friend Smallridge bears teſtimony in his epitaph to his conjugal affection:—

(eam) Aquiſgranum uſque valetudinis
Recuperandæ cauſâ profiſcentem, lubenter
Comitatus, ad extremum vitæ terminum
Summo amore fovit, morte divulſam
Per novem annos ſuperſtes plurimum deſideravit.

It may be more concluſive to remark, that he was always on the beſt of terms with the family of his wife, and a conſtant and welcome gueſt of Lord Berkeley's at Cranford; and that in his laſt will he provided for his interment in Cranford churchyard by her ſide.

He continued for a few years after his marriage to live in London, reſiding in the pariſh of St. Martin in the Fields, whence he addreſſed the following letters† to his friend Dr. Mapletoft, at Ipſwich:—‡

London, the 3d May, 1684.

"Dear Sir,—I could not poſſibly reſiſt ſo fair an opportunity, as Mr. Taylor, the bearer hereof, gives me of writing to you. The true friendſhip I have for you makes me intereſt myſelf in all your concerns, and I cannot but rejoyce that you are fixed to your ſatisfaction, though I ſuffer for the want of your good company; and I have that concern for the welfare of the public, as patiently to ſubmit when I am ſure ſuch ſenſible advantages will accrue to it. Mr. Taylor, Sir, deſired me to recommend him to

* That this attention on the part of the huſband was hardly merited by the amiability of the wife, ſeems hinted in the awkward eulogium of the rhymſter previouſly quoted, who repreſents his hero as chooſing Virtue rather than Pleaſure.

In Lucy's beauty Virtue did appear,
So ſhone her eyes, ſuch was her voice and air,
Awfully kind and lovingly ſevere.

A portrait of Lady Theophila Nelſon is ſaid to be preſerved in Berkeley Caſtle. Muſgrave Adverſaria. Brit. Mus. Art. Nelſon.

† *European Magazine*, vol. xv., pp. 91, 186.

‡ Dr. Mapletoft had been appointed to a Lectureſhip in that town, in the previous January.

your acquaintance, and he being to ſettle at Ipſwich, is not ignorant of the advantages of your friendſhip. I have known him ever ſince I have had the happineſs to be related to my Lord Berkley's family, and have alwaies found him a man of a very good temper, and to have given ſufficient proofs of his good conduct; which good qualities being joined with ſobriety and learning, as they make him in a great meaſure fit for the great character he bears of being one of God's immediate ſervants, ſo I am ſure they will entitle him to your reſpect; and if I have the vanity to think that your eſteem of him will not be leſſened by my recommendation, your pardon is due to the preſumption of one that ſincerely loves you. Pray be ſo kind as to let me know the ſtate of my aunt Applewhite's condition, not as if you enquired from me, but from yourſelf; one of her ſons I have provided, and in the laſt hard weather ſent her 5l. I ſhall do much as you ſhall adviſe me. My humble ſervice to Mrs. Mapletoft. No man wiſhes you more real happineſs than, Sir,

"Your moſt affectionate friend and ſervant,

"R. Nelson."

"To my worthy friend Dr. Mapletoft,
att Ipſwitch."

"Though, Sir I have not yet anſwered your letter, yet I took care to ſatisfy the contents of them, and have paid to Mr. Firmin 15l. 10s. which pays all the debts and includes the quarteridge beſides: for the time to come if you will be pleaſed to give me credit every quarter-day, I will be ſure to repay it here to Mr. Firmin; which I deſire to be put in mind of, not only as it may prove an help to my memory, but alſo as it may ſecure me your correſpondence four times a year. I am ſorry any reaſon has prevailed with my aunt to neglect her duty to God in the public worſhip. Pray ſatisfie yourſelf of her amendment in that particular, or elſe ſhe will incurr my diſpleaſure; and if you pleaſe let her know that except I have a good account of her attendance at Church, I ſhall be diſcouraged in my kindneſs to her. The character I have had of her makes me think her very unfit for keeping a

ſchool, but if ſhe cannot employ herſelf otherwaies, 'tis better than being idle. The Court is come to be my neighbour att St. James, where 'twill continue till Eaſter Munday, before which time 'tis expected the Queen-Dowager will be removed to Somerſet-houſe. Two days ago arrived the Duke of Ormond, and was received by the King with all poſſible demonſtrations of kindneſs and civility. The common topicks of diſcourſe at Court are the buſiness of the Coronation and the Election of Parliament men, neither of which ſubjects can afford you any news, unleſs you would be diverted by the ridiculous claims that are made by ſeveral that hold lands of the Crown. My humble ſervice to Mrs. Mapletoft.

"I am, Sir,

"Your moſt affectionate humble ſervant,

"R. NELSON."

London, 5th April, 1685.

"To Dr. Mapletoft, att Ipſwich, in Suffolk."

Date torn off.*

"I RETURN you, Sir, my thanks for the pains you have taken in my relation's concern, which though I can only acknowledge, yet being a piece of charity, you will not fail of a reward from a better hand. My mother has ſent her a piece of ſtuff to clothe her and her children, which may be equivalent to the 40s. you deſired for her. The King this day met his parliament, but has deferred ſpeaking to them concerning the reaſons of calling them till they had taken the oaths and teſt. My Lord Keeper commanded them from the King to chooſe a Speaker: they immediately without any conteſt choſe Sir John Trevor, who this afternoon has his Majeſty's approbation. The Houſe of Lords is adjourned till Friday, when 'tis expected the King will make his ſpeech; the time between this and that will be taken up in ſwearing the members. My humble ſervice to Mrs. Mapletoft.

"I am, Sir,

"Your obliged humble ſervant,

"R. NELSON."

* Sir John Trevor was choſen Speaker, 19 May, 1685.

It was during this reſidence in London that Nelſon's attachment to his wife was ſeverely teſted by the avowal of her converſion to the Roman Catholic faith. Her change of religion was owing to the converſations ſhe had had at Rome with Cardinal Howard, and ſubſequently at Paris with the celebrated Boſſuet.

Philip Howard had been placed at Cremona for education by his grandfather, the Earl of Arundel, collector of the marbles bearing his name; he had taken holy orders in the Roman Church, and after a ſhort ſtay in England upon the Reſtoration as chaplain to Queen Catherine, he received a cardinal's hat from Pope Clement X. in 1675. At Rome he acted as patron of the Engliſh Romaniſts, and was commonly called the Cardinal of England; while to Lady Theophila he would have a further ſpecial introduction from his relationſhip with the Berkeley family.

Boſſuet, the celebrated Biſhop of Meaux, was now in the height of his reputation, and bore no inconſiderable part in the Romaniſt movement, which was now taking place in England under the reſtored Stuarts. Among his perſonal converts are to be reckoned Lord Lovat, the unfortunate Jacobite leader of 1745, who was admitted by him into the Romiſh church at Paris, in 1703; and Lord Perth, the Chancellor of Scotland, whoſe converſion was owing to the peruſal of his celebrated "Expoſition of the Catholic Faith."

The different controverſial works of Boſſuet were tranſlated and publiſhed in London, immediately upon their appearance in Paris, and engaged the pens of our ableſt divines. James II. had formed the deſign of inviting him over into England, for the purpoſe of holding a conference with the leading theologians of the Anglican church. The examples, the perſuaſions, the threats of the Engliſh court were now all exerted on the Romiſh ſide. The Ducheſs of York, the daughter of Clarendon, printed her reaſons for

her converſion ; and Charles II. left for publication after his deceaſe the motives which he had been too cowardly or careleſs to avow during his life. Places of honour and truſt were ſhowered upon Roman Catholics. Henry Savile had to chooſe between his office of Vice-Chamberlain and the Proteſtantiſm which he had paraded at Charenton. A ſtream of diſtinguiſhed converts followed. James Cecil, Earl of Saliſbury, with his Counteſs and his two brothers, deſerted the faith of which the founder of their family, Elizabeth's great ſtateſman, had been ſo ſturdy a ſupporter. Sir Ellis Leighton, the brother of the Archbiſhop, joined the religion of the dominant powers. Sir Thomas Groſvenor loſt his lady—the Elizabeth Ebury who brought the Weſtminſter eſtates into his family—to the church that was in faſhion at court. And Samuel Pepys durſt not preſs his wife to go to church for fear ſhe ſhould "declare herſelf a Catholique," and deny him. Peter Manby, the Dean of Londonderry, Sclater the miniſter of Putney, Charnock, and Maſſey, and Obadiah Walker the Maſter of Univerſity, headed the renegade churchmen, while Dryden and Wycherly brought the homage or the ſupport to their newly adopted faith which literary ability could offer.

Lady Theophila Nelſon was thus but one of the many who now yielded to the current of theological opinion, and was carried into the boſom of the Romiſh church, from which no endeavour of her huſband or of his friends was able afterwards to reclaim her. Tillotſon, as was natural, exerted himſelf upon the occaſion, and was at the pains to addreſs to her a long letter of remonſtrance, concluding to the following effect,*

"That he did not doubt her ladyſhip was as much wearied in reading ſo long a letter as himſelf was in writing it, and that ſhe might imagine his time lay heavy upon his

* Birch's Life, p. 120.

hands, but the truth was, that everything which related to Mr. Nelſon lay ſo near his heart, that he could not ſay leſs upon ſuch an occaſion."

Nelſon is alſo ſaid* to have enliſted his friend Hickes in a ſimilar effort, and the dean is ſtated to have written or at leaſt to have publiſhed on Lady Theophila's account, his "Letters to a Popiſh Prieſt upon occaſion of a Young Gentlewoman's departing from the Church of England to that of Rome." But Nelſon was not known to Hickes till a later period of his life, when they were made acquainted by their mutual friend, the meek and pious Kettlewell. The volume alluded to, moreover, was not publiſhed till 1705, but a year before Lady Nelſon's death, and an inſpection of the letters will ſhow that the gentlewoman intended was a very different perſon, with whom Hickes was brought into communication by her brother in 1703. And the miſapprehenſion which has identified her with Lady Nelſon muſt have been grounded on a very curſory glance at the title-page of the volume, and the dedicatory epiſtle that follows to Robert Nelſon, Eſq.

But whoever might be the divines againſt whom Lady Theophila had to maintain her newly-formed opinions, ſhe was abundantly able to defend her cauſe. And ſhe is ſaid to have added to the vaſt array of controverſial pamphlets, which then made their appearance on either ſide, 457 of which are enumerated by Francis Peck in his Catalogue,† without exhauſting the titles of every one. Boſſuet was now anſwered by Wake, and by Dodwell. John Goter, the author of "The Papiſt Repreſented and Miſrepreſented," received replies from Dr. Clagett, and from Williams, afterwards Biſhop of Chicheſter. Godden's Conference found

* Nichols, "Lit. Anec." i. 17.

† "A Catalogue of the Diſcourſes written for and againſt Popery in the time of King James II. By Francis Peck. London. 1735."

an aſſailant in Stillingfleet, then Dean of St. Paul's, while Lewis Sabran engaged againſt Sherlock. Andrew Pulton, the head of the Jeſuit eſtabliſhment in the Savoy, held a conference in Long Acre with Teniſon, the vicar of St. Martin's in the Fields. Atterbury was the apologiſt of our Reformation, Smallridge wrote upon Church-government, and Burnet vindicated our orders. Either ſide affected to find their champions in the ranks of the people. Thomas Ward, a Romaniſt ſchoolmaſter, and a quondam Guardſman, entered the liſts with Teniſon, as "a Catholic Soldier;" while "a Proteſtant Footman, living with Madam H—— in Mark-lane", defended Sherlock's "Preſervative from a Jeſuit." Lady Nelſon is ſaid* to have been the author of "A Diſcourſe concerning a Judge of Controverſy in Matters of Religion, ſhowing the neceſſity of ſuch a Judge," which appeared in 4to. in 1686. It was thought deſerving of an elaborate reply† on the Proteſtant ſide by ſo eminent a writer as Sherlock, and it is written with a vivacity and clearneſs which yield no mean impreſſion of the intellectual capacity of the lady whom Nelſon had eſpouſed.

But the moral trial muſt not eſcape our notice which would reſult from ſuch a determined contrariety of religious opinion as now exiſted between Nelſon and his wife. The Chriſtian biographer will accept her converſion as part of God's providence for diſciplining his ſoul. And moſt fitting it was that one ſo favoured as he was with the world's ſmiles, and ſo richly endowed with natural gifts, and wanting nothing, as men would ſpeak, to make him happy, ſhould have one ſuch vexation at his heart, as a continual occaſion for ſelf-government and watchfulneſs.

* Birch, p. 120.

† "A Diſcourſe concerning a Judge of Controverſies in Matters of Religion, being an Anſwer to ſome Papers aſſerting the neceſſity of ſuch a Judge. With an addreſs to wavering Proteſtants, ſhewing what little reaſon they have to think of any change in their Religion. 1686."

The ſeceſſion of his wife to the Romiſh Church has the further advantage of giving additional prominence to Nelſon's own firm and deliberate adheſion to our Reformed religion. The claims of the Church of Rome were thus brought before him, in the cloſeſt way, at an early period of his life; and the effect was only to elicit from him the ſtrongeſt expreſſion of his diſſent from, and his repugnance to, her diſtinctive errors. He too became a pamphleteer in the abſorbing controverſy of the day, and was the author of an anonymous tract on Tranſubſtantiation, which appeared at the beginning of 1688. A challenge had been thrown down upon the Romaniſt ſide in "A Seeker's Requeſt to Catholic Prieſts and Proteſtant Miniſters for ſatisfying his Conſcience in the truth of what he ought to believe of the Lord's Supper;" the writer feigning to be a plain man, who underſtood neither Greek nor Latin, aſking for only one or two expreſs texts of Scripture, for or againſt the doctrine of the real Preſence, as taught in the Church of Rome, and declaring himſelf "reſolved to be either Catholic or Proteſtant, as the verdict upon this trial ſhall go." This brought out (as was intended), "the Catholic Anſwer to the Seeker's Requeſt," appealing to St. John vi. 48, and to the words of Inſtitution, St. Matthew xxvi. 26; and coarſely threatening to "unkennel the fox," and expoſe the Proteſtant reſort to metaphorical interpretation:—"If they go to figures and parables, we know how to handle them." To this candid and elegant pair of controverſialiſts, Nelſon thought proper to reply in his "Tranſubſtantiation contrary to Scripture, or the Proteſtant's Anſwer to the Seeker's Requeſt." He had evidently been brought into perſonal colliſion with the writers, and felt himſelf bound to take notice of their productions, for the ſake of a friend in whom he was intereſted. This tract poſſeſſes a natural intereſt, as the earlieſt pub-

lication which proceeded from his pen; and this circumſtance, with the rarity of its occurrence, will be ſufficient apology for ſomewhat lengthy quotations. It opens with a vivacity and a pleaſantry of manner, which will be ſtrange to thoſe who are only acquainted with his ſubſequent devotional compoſitions:

"Sir," he begins, "You are the pleaſanteſt *Seeker* I ever met with; for you firſt ſuppoſe controverſies already determined, and then *ſeek* a way to reſolve them. What greater diſpute have we had, than whether the title of Catholick juſtly belongs to thoſe of the Church of Rome, ſo as to exclude all that are not of her communion? But this you give up in the perſon of a *Seeker*, calling thoſe Catholicks by way of diſtinction from us, who call us by the name of Hereticks. If you do not know the meaning of the word, you are a *Seeker* indeed; if you do, and give it ſo to them as to exclude us, we do by no means allow you to be a *Seeker;* for you have found that which none but the Donatiſts had found before you, viz. that a leg or arm may be called the whole body. But in this matter I am the greateſt *Seeker* of the two, for I am to ſeek both for ſenſe and reaſon in it.

"Call us *Proteſtants* as often as you pleaſe; it puts us in mind of errors renounced by us under that name which we are not aſhamed of, as long as we know there was ſo great reaſon for it; and we think we have reaſon enough to ſatisfie any impartial *Seeker;* but for *blind Seekers* there is nothing ſo proper as an implicit faith and tranſubſtantiation. Of all ſubjects methinks a *Seeker* ſhould not have pitched on tranſubſtantiation, unleſs he were to *ſeek* for his ſenſes; and of all places he ſhould not have ſought for it in Scripture, unleſs he were reſolved as well to *ſeek* where it was not, as where it was to be found."

"Indeed the Scriptures are ſo ſlight a foundation for the ſuperſtructure of Tranſubſtantiation, that the moſt diſcerning men of the communion of the Church of Rome, who have been eminent for learning, have frankly confeſt the whole matter; and thought their faith in this

particular wanted an adventitious ſupport, which has made them (though in vain) call upon ancient Fathers, and the authority of the Church for help at time of need. Now one would have thought this might be taken notice of by one that ſets up for a *Seeker:* but 'tis a ſign you are but lately engaged in this employment, and have made but a little progreſs in your deſign; or elſe you could never think it reaſonable to oppoſe the authority of one unknown anſwerer of that communion, to the profeſt opinion of ſo many great divines in that Church. But becauſe I am willing to further the propoſal of an impartial enquiry, ſo agreeable to Proteſtant principles, and ſo contrary to Popiſh ones: I will direct you to places which you may examine at your own leiſure, where you will find this point freely granted by our adverſaries.

"Amongſt theſe I ſhall begin with Scotus, who held (ſaith Bellarmine), that there was not one place of Scripture ſo expreſs, that without the determination of the Church, it would evidently compel a man to receive Tranſubſtantiation. To him I may add Cardinal Alliaco* Gabriel Biel,† Fiſher Biſhop of Rocheſter,‡ and Cardinal Cajetan, § who ſaith, particularly, that theſe words, 'This is my body,' are not ſufficient to prove it, ſetting aſide the authority of the Church, ſince there is *nothing appears from the Goſpel to enforce one to believe that they are to be taken properly.* Which words are ſo expreſs that they were left out in the Roman edition by the order of Pope Pius the V. as Suarez ſaith. ‖

"I ſhall conclude this point with Bellarmine, who after he had recited the opinion of Scotus, that there is no place of Scripture ſo expreſs, &c. adds, 'And that is not altogether improbable: For although the Scriptures ſeem to us to be ſo clear, that they compel a man not obſtinate; yet it may deſervedly be doubted, ſeeing the moſt learned and acute men, ſuch as Scotus was, thought otherwiſe.' And as it's confeſſed of the words of conſecration, 'This is my body,' ſo the 6th chapter of St. John has undergone the

* In 4 Sent, q. 6, art. 1.
† In Can. Mis. Lect. 40.
‡ Contra, Capt. Babyl. n. 8.
§ In 3 p. Tho. q. 75, art. 1.
‖ Tom. 3, Disp. 46.

ſame fate. Albertinus, who went to the bottom of this controverſie in his excellent Treatiſe *de Euchar.** reckons up about thirty learned of ſeveral degrees in the Roman communion, who reject the application of that chapter as not ſerving to this purpoſe. Methinks theſe full and free conceſſions ſhould ſufficiently ſatisfie you how little they of the Church of Rome lay the ſtreſs of this cauſe upon the clearneſs of Scripture; and 'tis likely if you had known it, you would have been diſcouraged in your attempt."

He then proceeds to examine the paſſages which the Anſwerer had alleged, as concluſive for the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation. And he ventures to argue at length that the diſcourſe of our Saviour in the ſixth chapter of St. John's Goſpel had no ſpecial reference to the Sacrament; an interpretation in which he does but follow Biſhop Jeremy Taylor, to whom he was alſo indebted for his previous liſt of authorities, but which our own church diſtinctly negatives in her communion office, where ſhe borrows from this chapter to expreſs the benefits we receive by the Holy Sacrament:—"For then we ſpiritually eat the fleſh of Chriſt and drink his blood, then we dwell in Chriſt and Chriſt in us."

Upon the ſecond paſſage alleged, viz., the ſentence of conſecration, "This is my body," with more juſtice Nelſon exclaims, "Where is one word here of all that makes up the doctrine of tranſubſtantiation?"

"Where, that the *This*, whatever it means, *is the true body and blood, together with the ſoul and divinity of our Lord Jeſus, in the ſelf-ſame ſubſtance wherein he was born of the Virgin?* Where, that this true body and blood, is *truly, really, and ſubſtantially contained under the forms of bread and wine?* Where, that the bread and wine are upon conſecration turned into the true body and blood of Chriſt? And with ſubmiſſion to you, I would only aſk, What is the *This*, of which Chriſt ſaith, it *is my body?*

* L. 1 c. 390, p. 20.

If it be bread, then the bread is in the literal ſenſe, the ſubſtance of Chriſt's body, and ſo overthrows the change pretended to be made in tranſubſtantiation; for a thing cannot be ſaid to be changed into what it is already; if by the *This* is not meant the *bread*, then the bread could never be turned into the body of Chriſt by virtue of the words, *This is my Body;* let the Anſwerer take his choice."

He proceeds to argue that,—

"There are many things in our bleſſed Saviour's inſtitution, and adminiſtration of the holy Supper, that cannot have a literal ſenſe. As, when he ſaith, 'This is my body, which is broken for you;' before it was broken. 'This cup is the New Teſtament in my blood,' St. Matt. xxvi., 26, 28; 1 Cor. xi. 24.

"And then, if we give a figurative explication of the words, 'This is my body;' we may by ſo doing no more depart from the true ſenſe of them, nor in the Anſwerer's prophane phraſe, no more *give Chriſt the lye*, than they themſelves, or we do, when both do take the cup for the wine in the cup; and the wine in the cup for the ſign or ſeal of the New Teſtament."

He urges that we have the very letter of Scripture in our favour, declaring that there is no ſubſtantial change of the elements upon conſecration, but that they remain of the ſame ſubſtance, and are as really and properly bread and wine after conſecration as before. For St. Paul calls it five times bread after he had related the inſtitution, 1 Cor. xi. 26, 27, 28; x. 16, 17; and the whole ſolemnity had from it the name of "breaking bread," Acts ii. 42; xx. 7; and our Saviour himſelf, after he had ſaid "This is my blood," in the next verſe calls it "the fruit of the vine." St. Matt. xxvi. 28, 29; St. Mark xiv. 24, 25. He argues that the words, "This *is* my body," muſt be underſtood figuratively, the bread being the figure, the repreſentation, the memorial, the communication of Chriſt's body. He is

careful to add, that it by no means follows that the Sacrament is nothing but a figure.

"For we always eſteem this Sacrament as a divine inſtitution and means of grace, and that by a worthy participation of it, we partake of that grace which is thereto promiſed, therein exhibited, and thereby conveyed. So that though we own it to be *a figure of Chriſt's body*, and that it's to be celebrated *in remembrance of His death;* yet that 'tis *only* a figure, and *only* a remembrance, is a pure invention."

He concludes by addreſſing a ſarcaſtic obſervation to the Seeker on the inſincerity of ſuch an appeal to Scripture by a Romaniſt.

"I ſhall obſerve but one thing more, and that is the applauſe and commendation the Catholic Anſwerer gives to your zeal to know the truth, by trying what Scriptures they have for it, and what the Proteſtants have againſt it, and that he is far from blaming you in that procedure. I am afraid this is but a copy of his countenance. I am ſure 'tis very oppoſite to the doctrine and practice of the Church of Rome, which has long time diſcovered the evil effects of being too familiar with the Bible, and therefore has wiſely lockt it up in a language unknown to the common people, and ſuffers it to be read only by thoſe who entirely ſubmit their underſtandings to the ſenſe of their Church. Alas! This dangerous book has given birth to many a peſtilent hereſie; and ſhould people be too buſie with it, the infection would increaſe, and ſoon overſpread the world; at beſt 'tis apt to raiſe chimæras in good people's minds, and where they have their mother the Church at hand, how unſafe it is to ſeek for any farther directions. Beſides, the ſame reaſon he gives for trying this doctrine by Scripture, becauſe it imports an eternity of bliſs or torment, will make people apt to deſire the ſame aſſurance for other doctrines, and then farewel the worſhip of images, invocation of ſaints, purgatory, &c., with many other of their innovations and errors which depend upon tradition, and which his Church deſires not ſo eaſily to part with."

And he takes his leave of his adverſary with a ſeverity which ſuits ill with his natural gentleneſs of diſpoſition.

"And therefore, before you ſend another 'requeſt,' pray take a little more care to ſhew yourſelf ſincere; and that you either prove yourſelf in earneſt ſo to be; or if you have no regard to that, yet take ſome care that you better diſſemble it."

The Seeker offered no rejoinder to this anſwer of Nelſon's; but left it to a friend to interpoſe in his behalf in "A Catholic Letter to the Seeker; or, a Reply to the Proteſtant Anſwer to the Seeker;" while Williams (afterwards Biſhop of Chicheſter), replied on Nelſon's ſide, and cloſed the debate with "The Proteſtant Anſwer to the Catholic Letter to the Seeker; or, a Vindication of the Proteſtant's Anſwer to the Seeker's Requeſt," 1688.

Nelſon himſelf had probably by this time eſcaped from the "Strife of Tongues" in London; for his lady falling into an ill ſtate of health, for the recovery of it he now paſſed with her into France, and went to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he continued ſome months, and from whence, after a brief viſit to England at the end of the year, (where he found all things in confuſion upon the withdrawal of the king,) he proceeded in his travels with his lady through France to Rome.

"Never was any Engliſhman," writes his intimate friend Dr. Francis Lee,* "known to be ſo much careſſed as he in the different foreign courts which he viſited, as the many letters written to him from princes, miniſters of ſtate, noblemen, and perſons of character, do abundantly teſtify."

During ſix months of his reſidence at Florence, he was engaged in a weekly correſpondence with the Earl of Melfort, James the Second's ambaſſador at the Court of Rome, to

* "Life of Kettlewell," p. 434.

whom he tranſmitted, from time to time, the political news which he received from England; and the unreſerve with which he now threw himſelf into the arms of the Jacobite party cannot be better exhibited than by ſome quotations from the letters which Lord Melfort now addreſſed to him.*. The firſt is dated May 6, 1690.

"Sir,—The favour I had of your letter of the 2nd inſtant was moſt welcome to me on every account, but moſt particularly becauſe it brought me the good news of your's and my lady's ſafe arrival at Florence, which I aſſure you was moſt earneſtly wiſhed for, both by my Lady Melfort and myſelf.

"I moſt humbly thank you for your news. They are moſt particular, and the only trouble I have is that you have been at ſo much pains to write ſo much with your own hand. The pamphlette I have not had time to read, the poſt being juſt a-going, and it's not half an hour ſince I had your letter, being juſt returned from Caſtello.

"By the French poſt we hear that in general all goes well for the King, and that the P. of Or(ange) is much hated. The Duke of Grafton would have uſed his popularity againſt the watermen to preſs ſome, and was ſoundly banged and thrown into the river, and narrowly eſcaped. I hope ſhortly to have better news to ſend you, and I am obliged not to fail of anything that can give me any occaſion to let you and your lady know how much my Lady Melfort and I are,

"Sir, your moſt humble Servants,

"Melfort."

On the 3rd of June he aſſures his correſpondent, that "the uſurper is not to go to Ireland in perſon." The following month (July 14th) he thanks Nelſon for his better information:

"And though the news you ſend me ſeem to be much

* Regiſter of the Right Honourable the Earl of Melfort's Letters, deſpatched at Rome. Lanſdowne MSS. Brit. Mus. 1163.

to our diſadvantage, yet I muſt inform you it is not on the ſucceſs of our affairs in Ireland, that the King's affairs depend; for if the French fleet do what we have good reaſon to believe it will do, it will not be much matter tho' Schomberg gain a dozen of ſuch caſtles as Balengarie in Ireland. You may expect to hear ſhortly that the French fleet have at leaſt ſhowed themſelves to the Engliſh coaſt, and perhaps they have given an alarm to ſome of its ſeaports, which, conſidering that Orange has but by his own account 10,000 men in England, and theſe not ſufficient for the garriſons, may prove of ſome weight to his affairs."

After a fortnight's ſilence, on the 29th of July, Melfort complains, "Not having heard from you this long while, I am afraid you are ſick." On the 12th of the following month, he forwards his news of the battle of the Boyne:

"The relation as ſent us from France is, that there arrived three couriers from Ireland; one on the 24th to give an account all was loſt, and the King come away; one on the 25th that the battle was gained, and Schomberg killed dead on the place, and the Prince of Orange ſhot in the ſhoulder and leg; and the laſt on the 28th with the news of the P. of Orange's death, two days after the bataile. At Verſailles on 28th bonfires for P. of O.'s death."

On Sept. 9, he conſoles himſelf under the diſappointment of better information, that William's "wound is not likely to cure, and that they cannot ſtop the blood." Next week he buoys up his hopes, by

"A letter from a merchant in London to a correſpondent in Paris, not to ſend him any lace, for if the news, ſays he, be true as we have them from Ireland, the court muſt go into mourning for the P. of Orange, and they will lie on my hand."

And on the 23rd, he takes comfort that "if Orange be not dead, he is deadly ſick." While by October the 14th,

he has found leiſure to balance the contradictory reports, and writes as follows:

"Sir,—I thank you for your news, and though I am ſorry to put you to ſo much trouble, yet I cannot hinder myſelf from deſiring you to continue it. The news of the laſt letters of the 18th from Paris, brings an account of the repulſe that the Prince of Orange's army has had before Limerick, with the loſs of 1300 men of their beſt troops, and that the ſickneſs is got into his army again, ſo that they hope to keep out this winter in deſpight of him. The letters concerning him are various; thoſe who are within the town, and ſo worſe informed, ſay that he is in the army, but others ſay he is dead at Dublin; in ſhort there is no certainty; tho' to ſee the letters one would think him alive, yet there are ſo many againſt, that we muſt have patience till we can diſcover the truth.

"In Scotland affairs go well, and the Highlanders are much ſtronger than the rebels; they have come down and poſſeſſed themſelves of Aberdeen and Montroſe, and the paſs of Stirling, by which they are maſters of the beſt countries of Scotland, and may live in eaſe and plenty, which will ſoon increaſe their party.

"I hope ere it be long to ſend you better news; in the meantime I aſſure you that my Lady Melfort and I are both to my Lady Theophila and to yourſelf,

"Moſt humble ſervants,

"Melfort."

It was while Nelſon was carrying on this political communication with Melfort, that he found himſelf called upon to addreſs a controverſial letter to a different kind of correſpondent. His lengthened ſtay at Rome had given Lady Theophila an opportunity of renewing her acquaintance with Cardinal Howard.* And Nelſon found himſelf

* A letter of this year's date from Cardinal Howard to Lady Theophila has been preſerved by Thoreſby, to whom it was given by Nelſon, as an addi-

expoſed to ſolicitations from one of his ſubordinates, which he thought proper to repel in the following thoughtful and manly letter to an Engliſh prieſt at Rome. It is an evidence of his natural modeſty, and of the ſincerity with which he profeſſes at its cloſe the diſtaſte he had for controverſy, that this excellent letter remained for fifteen years unpubliſhed, until his friend Dr. Hickes obtained his leave to include it in a collection of Controverſial Pieces which he publiſhed in 1705. It is there printed in company with Biſhop Bull's tract on "The Corruptions of the Church of Rome," in reply to Boſſuet, with the celebrated Charles Leſlie's anſwer to the ſame queries of the Biſhop of Meaux, and with Dr. Hickes' own Letters to a Popiſh prieſt in London.

"It is written," ſays Hickes, in the dedicatory epiſtle to his friend, "with that felicity of temper whereof you are maſter in great perfection; and by the benefit whereof you can diſcourſe with all ſorts of men, with whom you differ in matters of religion, in the ſame eaſy and obliging manner, as with thoſe with whom you do agree."

tion to his collection of autographs. The Cardinal's long reſidence in a foreign country had evidently impaired his Engliſh grammar and orthography.

"Madame,—I am ſorry that neyther whilſt you were heare, nor ſince you went theather, I could not ſerve y^r^ Lad^p^. according to y^r^ deſerts, or my deſires, although you are pleaſed to take ſo much notice by yours of y^e^ 23 currant, and that the Pri^r^ of S.M^a^. Novella hath in ſome part endeavoured to ſupply my wants, as I ſhall acknowledge unto him at his arivall heare, w'th deſires to continue the ſame at his returne in the beſt manner he can, as alſo unto your good ould Lady, with Mr. Nelſon and Sir Barkley. The ſame father Langton writeth me, he hath offered y^r^ Lad^p^. according unto his capacity, he being a good meaning man, w^ch^ is all that can be at preſent offered by

"Your Lad^p's^.

"Moſt humble Serv^t^. and Kindſman,

"Card^l^ of Norfolke."

R. 27 May, 1690.

Brit. Muſeum MSS. Birch, 4274. 158.

[*A Letter to an Engliſh Prieſt of the Roman Communion, at Rome.*]

"I ſhould not ſo long have neglected anſwering your obliging lines of the 30th of Sept. laſt, if I had not expected the happineſs of your good company here at Florence; the poſtſcript of your letter led me into this error, and Don John my Lord Cardinal's cup-bearer confirm'd me in it, and 'tis but lately I have been undeceiv'd. I am glad you had ſuch ſatisfaction from your journey to Naples: I don't queſtion the truth of that matter of fact of which you affirm yourſelf to have been an eye-witneſs; yet I cannot apprehend, how you can be aſſured that the *ſubſtance which you ſaw in the glaſs vial hard and dry like reddiſh earth, and which you might have crumbled with your fingers, was, when liquified, blood;* nor yet leſs that it was the blood of St. Januarius Biſhop of Benevent, martyr'd in the time of Diocleſian, as you are pleaſed to affirm in your Letter. But I wonder moſt how you can pretend to be convinc'd with perfect evidence of ſenſe, that there was no human artifice in this. The relation that your ſenſes gave you, was only that upon the *contact of the ſilver caſe wherein is ſuppoſed to be depoſited the head of the ſame Saint, the dry matter like reddiſh earth liquified, and became ſoft like a cake of blood;* now all this may be true, and yet the whole buſineſs an impoſture. For one ought to examine what cauſes there may be in natural things capable to produce the ſame effect, and upon what authority this ſuppoſed miracle is eſtabliſhed; for certainly you will not ſay, there has never been any falſe miracles pretended to in the Church of Rome. Therefore I conclude that the evidence of ſenſe you had in this caſe, could not be a perfect conviction to you, that you was not impoſed upon by the ſubtilty of others. I will not make any advantage of that diſparagement you often put upon the evidence of ſenſe in other caſes, and conſequently weaken the ſtrength of its aſſurance; but I think the inference you draw from the whole, as lame as the former aſſertion, viz., *That 'twas God alone did it, who one day*

will make dead bones and dead blood live; for miracles, when true, are not always the immediate effect of divine power, and angels both good and bad may do ſuch things as exceed any natural power known to us. I am ſure the Scripture tells us that the *working of Satan* is *with all power, and ſigns, and lying wonders*, and where the love of the truth is not received, God *will ſend ſtrong deluſions that they ſhould believe a Lye.* I am not much concerned for the reflection you make upon our Church for want of miracles: 'twas the ſame thing in the time of St. Chryſoſtom, who in his ſixth Homily upon the Firſt Epiſtle to the Corinthians, ſhews the neceſſity and uſefulneſs of them for the ſtabliſhing Chriſtianity, which being once effected, 'twas rather neceſſary they ſhould ceaſe than continue; for if miracles were always viſible, faith would have leſs merit, and conſequently leſs reward. I am thoroughly ſatisfied, that the Chriſtian religion was confirm'd by the miracles of our Saviour and his apoſtles, which tho' they were not in that great abundance nor upon ſuch trivial occaſions, as are thoſe produced by the Roman Church, yet they will much better bear the teſt of a ſtrict examination, and carry greater evidences of their divinity. As for the proof of negatives, I govern myſelf by St. Paul's rule, that 'If any pervert the Goſpel of Chriſt, or that he or an angel from Heaven ſhould preach any other Goſpel, let them be accurſed.' This is the ſure word of prophecy, whereunto you would do well to take heed, as unto a light, that ſhineth in a dark place.

"I would not be thought to detract from the vertue of Faith, for without it 'tis impoſſible to pleaſe God; tho' I cannot but obſerve that you miſtake St. Paul when you make him ſay, *that tho' we give all we have to the poor, yet without Faith it avails nothing.* 'Tis to Charity he gives ſuch a high encomium in that chapter; and leſt Chriſtians ſhould lay too great a ſtreſs upon their orthodoxy in believing, he adds that tho' one *has all faith, ſo that he could remove mountains, and have no charity, he is nothing.* The parting with all one has, and the laying down one's very life, the two great inſtances our Saviour gives of the perfection of his doctrine, are not ſufficient without this noble vertue. This is that more excellent way the

Apoſtle ſhew'd unto the Corinthians, and which he deſired them earneſtly to covet.

"I would not have you to miſtake me, therefore; I aſſure you, I no more take the Court of Rome, than I do the Roman Church, for the Catholick Church. But being, when at Rome, at the head, as you ſuppoſe, of unity, one may be thought likelier to get ſome knowledge of the body there, than in a peſtilential northern air, and this was all I pretended to; if you perſiſt to think otherways, I ſubmit.

"I have carefully conſidered what you ſay about Infallibility, and I cannot find you have in the leaſt ſhaken the evidence of my propoſition, *viz.*, *That Infallibility, the ground of all your deluſions, has no foundation either in holy Scriptures or primitive antiquity*. 'Tis like a houſe built upon a rock, that can bear the attacks of the greateſt ſubtilty, and can receive no prejudice from the artificial attempts that are made to deſtroy it. You aſk me, *How I am perſuaded of this?* 'Tis only by having examined Scripture and antiquity, both which I find ſilent concerning this point. At the ſame time I own myſelf to be a man, which implies a creature ſubject to error, *& nihil humani à me alienum eſſe puto;* therefore you have no reaſon to aſſent to what I propoſe, till you have made the ſame tryal. And tho' I am not ſo unjuſt as to be angry with you for ſuſpecting me to be in the wrong, yet it would have been much better for you to have proved it, than only to miſtruſt it; for your letter brings no conviction of the intereſt that doctrine of Infallibility has either in Scripture or antiquity. All you quote from the one is our Saviour's promiſe of *being with his diſciples to the end of the world*. And *why ſhould we think*, ſay you, *he would be with them, but to preſerve them from error?* All that you urge from the other, is the *liberty the ancient councils took of making their definitions articles of faith;* as *that Chriſt is conſubſtantial with the Father*, &c. which Creed we own and receive, and therefore conſequently you infer we ought to embrace Infallibility of the Church. To both I will give you as plain and ſhort anſwers as I can, *& valeant quantum valere poſſint*. As

to the promiſe of our Saviour, which we find recorded in the 28th of St. Matth. 19, 20. "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptiſing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghoſt, teaching them to obſerve all things whatſoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you always, even to the end of the world:" All that can reaſonably be drawn from this text is, that the Chriſtian Church ſhall be always exiſtent to the end of the world. Tho' if it were poſitive for its Infallibility, as it is for its exiſtence, yet before it would do you any good, you muſt prove, that by *you*, is meant *you*, and *only you*, of the Church of Rome; that Chriſt has obliged himſelf not only to give ſufficient means of direction, but that he will neceſſitate men to follow them, and that he will not only preſerve them from all damnable errors, but alſo from all erroneous doctrines. Yet if this were granted, which you cannot expect from me; if the promiſe here be abſolute, every one who has power to preach and baptize, might claim infallible aſſiſtance by vertue of it; and ſo every pariſh prieſt would have as good a title to Infallibility as the Pope and a General Council. 'Tis certain there is no difficulty in believing, that God could have promiſed to his Church a total preſervation from error; as it is blaſphemy to ſay he would not have made it good, if he had promiſed it. But our queſtion is, whether he has promiſed it or no? Not what God is capable of doing? But what God has really and actually done? If you object I interpret Scripture by my own private reaſon which is liable to error, I would fain know a better method of proceeding, as long as the infallible Interpreter is the controverſy in debate.

"I think the proof you bring from antiquity, makes as little to the purpoſe as that you have brought from the Scripture; for where is the conſequence, that a General Council has explained an article of faith and that this explanation has been received by the Catholick Church, *ergo*, the Church of Rome is infallible. We receive the determinations of the Council of Nice, becauſe they are agreeable to Scripture and to the ſentiments of the fathers, both of the Greek and Latin Church, which preceded that

General Council. We reject the determinations of the Council of Ariminum, becauſe they are contrary to both. So that our receiving them does not depend upon the opinion of their Infallibility. They never arrogated this privilege to themſelves; for if they had pretended to it, they could not have neglected to have ſettled a matter of ſuch importance as the foundation of all their proceedings, their ſilence in this caſe is worth a thouſand arguments; for who can think it could be their intereſt to have concealed ſo great a treaſure? And leſt in time great inconveniences might happen by pretending to explicate the articles of faith, and by inſerting thoſe explications in the Creed; one of the firſt four General Councils, I think 'tis that of Epheſus (tho' I am not poſitive, for I have not books by me to clear it) made a decree, which prohibited the farther enlarging of the Creed by any additional explications, foreſeeing thoſe miſchiefs which latter ages have felt, and with which particularly the Council of Trent has burthened us.

"I am not ignorant, that two of your great champions, Cardinal Perron and Petavius, to raiſe the authority of General Councils, and to make the rule of their faith appear more plauſable, have aſperſed not only the Holy Scriptures as uncapable, by reaſon of their obſcurity, to prove the great and neceſſary point of our Saviour's divinity; but have alſo impeached the fathers of the firſt three centuries as tardy in the ſame point, whoſe writings they ſay, touching this important article, *cum orthodoxæ fidei regulâ minimè conſentiunt.* Bleſſed God! that men ſhould be ſo fond of humane inventions, as to ſacrifice to them thoſe pillars of our faith, which are alone proper and able to ſupport it, I mean Scripture and primitive antiquity. But to do juſtice to the memory of ſo learned a man as Petavius, the Biſhop of Meaux told me, diſcourſing with him once on this ſubject, that in the laſt edition he made of his works, he retracted this opinion, which I am willing to believe upon the authority of that great man, whoſe admirable talents as well as particular favours challenge a great deal of reſpect and eſteem from me, which I ſhall always pay him, tho' he is an adverſary to the religion I profeſs. By this judge

what pitiful ſhifts your great Goliahs have been reduced to, when they have found themſelves oppreſt by the weight of truth. Chriſt's being conſubſtantial with the Father was believ'd long before the Council of Nice; 'twas no new doctrine invented by them, but only declared by them, to be and to have been the belief of the Church. You have hinted at the great advantages of the doctrine of Infallibility in order to the ſuppreſſing of ſchiſms and hereſies, but they are only ſo in ſpeculation. Your Church itſelf does not think it ſufficient for that purpoſe; or elſe ſhe is very uncharitable to make uſe of the ſeverer method of an Inquiſition, and upon all occaſions to call for the aſſiſtance of the temporal ſword, as the ſureſt means to ſuppreſs them. No, he that is diſpoſed in mind to receive the deciſions of any church as infallible without judging of them, is much likelier to fall into hereſy, than he who thinks all ſuch determinations muſt be examined by Scripture and primitive antiquity; ſince by this privilege the Pope and his faction challenge, of interpreting God's laws without error, 'tis eaſy for them to impoſe what they pleaſe, the power of making laws and the ſole power of interpreting them being much akin. You add one thing more, that no Proteſtant can deny but 'that the ſtate of the Church would be much better in being ſecured from error in her deciſions, and therefore we cannot think but that Chriſt who did all things well, would do that which is beſt for his Church.' I think it is much ſafer arguing the contrary way, that Chriſt has not eſtabliſhed any ſuch power, and that therefore it is not beſt for the ſtate of the Church. The ground of your aſſertion is too preſumptuous, that what ſeems fit to human reaſon, ſhould ſeem fit to the infallible judgment of God. 'Tis our duty to be thankful for thoſe means God has left us to work out our ſalvation; and not to conclude he hath done that which he hath not done, becauſe our ſhallow capacities judge it fit to be done. But what art thou, O man, that objecteſt againſt God?

"Chriſt has left us ſuch excellent precepts of modeſty, humility, patience, Chriſtian forbearance, and charity, that the practice of them would make us much ſooner

agree than any new method you can propoſe; at leaſt if we do not agree, they will inſpire us with ſuch a noble temper, as heartily to compaſſionate one another, to live amicably and friendly together, and not be pulling out one another's eyes, becauſe we do not ſee things the ſame way. This is that in which I would have always different parties zealous, for there is nothing wanting very often to extinguiſh ill will, but an opportunity for men to converſe lovingly together, by which they will quickly perceive they are not ſuch monſters, as they are repreſented to one another at a diſtance.

"This I endeavour, according to my weakneſs, to practice myſelf; this I inculcate into all my friends; that if we cannot agree in our opinions, yet to take care that they do not rob us of our charity and love of one another, which in the ſight of God is of great price.

"You ſee what a long letter you have drawn upon your ſelf; it would have been diſreſpectful to you, as well as to truth, to have neglected an anſwer, and therefore I don't think myſelf oblig'd to make any apology. Tho' if you had known how much I have been ſurfeited with controverſies upon a melancholy occaſion, you would accept of this ſmall attempt as a favour.

"I am, Sir,

"Your faithful humble ſervant,

"R. Nelson.

"Florence, 26 Dec. 1690."

While Nelſon at Florence was carrying on this correſpondence with political friends and theological antagoniſts at Rome, he was ſtill maintaining at the ſame time his communications with his friend Tillotſon in England. Juſt before his departure for the continent, he had been beſtirring himſelf for the relief of the French Proteſtants at Canterbury, and deſpatching for them at Tillotſon's requeſt, a ſupply of French Bibles from town. We now (Feb 16,

'90-91) find the dean addreſſing him at Florence in reply to two letters he had recently received from him, giving him an account of the plot in which Turner, biſhop of Ely, was implicated, and for which Lord Preſton was condemned to death, touching upon the ſeduction of Lady Theophila and her daughter from the Proteſtant religion, and praying that God would preſerve her huſband, and her ſon, Sir Berkeley Lucy, in the truth.

"And ſo," adds he, "I do for thoſe that are fallen from it, that God would grant them repentance to the acknowledgment of it. I pity poor Miſs who is more innocently ſeduced, but my lady much more, conſidering the degree of her underſtanding, and the difference of the two religions."*

And amid the diſtractions which ſurrounded him upon his conſecration to the primacy, he found time to reply to the letters which Nelſon had juſt addreſſed to him from Florence and Venice, in the following May, and to pour out into his friendly ear the heſitations and perplexities which beſet him in his new poſition.

"God and time," he writes, "can only tell what a man will prove in any condition. But I hope I cannot ſo far miſtake myſelf, as not to be able to aſſure you, that no change of fortune can alter my mind towards you. The ſtation in which I am now plac'd, is much more likely to make me weary of my life than of my friends.

"Since this calamity befel me, I have not yet had time to deliver Sir Berkeley's letter to his ſiſter; which I intend to do at my firſt leiſure. I was loth to viſit her at Mr. Knox's; and it is leſs fit now. I think to ſend for her over to Mr. Beale's, and there to talk with her.

"My wife and my ſon deſire to have their very humble ſervices preſented to yourſelf and my lady, to whom, and Sir B. L. I intreat you to tender mine.

* Birch, p. 238.

"I am glad that we are like to ſee you ſooner than you thought. I pray God to preſerve you all, and bring you ſafe to your friends; amongſt whom I hope you will always reckon,

"Dear Sir, your faithful friend and ſervant,

"Jo. Cant.

"*P.S.* You may think, Sir, by this letter, that time lies upon my hands; but it is you that lie ſo near my heart."

From the frankneſs of Tillotſon's communications to Nelſon upon political matters, it would ſeem that he was unaware of the extent to which his friend had engaged in the Jacobite cauſe. And it muſt have been one of the keeneſt mortifications attending his elevation to Sancroft's vacant chair, that he found himſelf compelled, at the end of the year, to abandon his early friend to the rival nonjuring communion. It was in December, 1691, when Nelſon had reached the Hague on his return to England, and was making ſome ſtay there in the houſe of his brother-in-law, Lord Durſley, then envoy plenipotentiary to the States of Holland, that they exchanged letters upon a ſubject ſo intereſting to them both. Nelſon was fixed in his reſolution not to acknowledge the government of William and Mary, but ſeems to have doubted whether he might not continue to attend the ſervices of the eſtabliſhed church in ſpite of his being unable to join conſcientiouſly in the prayers for thoſe whom he deemed uſurpers. The new archbiſhop was the perſon whom he frankly aſked to reſolve his doubts, and Tillotſon as frankly gave his opinion in reply: *

"As to the caſe you put, I wonder men ſhould be

* Birch, p. 259.

divided in opinion about it. I think it plain that no man can join in prayers in which there is any petition which he is verily perſuaded is ſinful. I cannot endure a trick anywhere, much leſs in religion."

This opinion ſeems to have decided Nelſon to join the nonjuring communion, and to have interrupted that confidential intercourſe which he had ſo long enjoyed with the friend of his youth. No further correſpondence between them is preſerved by the biographer of the archbiſhop. Nelſon, in the ſociety of his nonjuring friends, contracted a ſtill greater averſion for the latitudinarian principles of which Tillotſon was the patron. And while he reſented the attacks which were being ſo conſtantly made upon his former friend by Jacobite malevolence, yet he no longer took him for the guide of his life, and but ſeldom alludes to his name in all his ſubſequent writings. Only at Tillotſon's death-bed did his former affection ſeem to revive and bridge over all their differences in politics and in religion. He attended him at Lambeth the two laſt nights of his life, and held him in his arms when he expired, after five days' illneſs, November 23, 1694. He continued the offices of kindneſs to Tillotſon's widow, who was left in but narrow circumſtances at his deceaſe; and when the death of her ſon-in-law, Mr. Chadwick, a few years later, involved her in freſh embarraſſments, he ventured an appeal to King William's Chancellor, the celebrated Lord Somers, in her behalf.

"My Lord.—I took the liberty to put Mr. Chancellor of the Exchequer* in mind of that favourable anſwer your Lordſhip procured from the King in reference to Mrs. Tillotſon's affairs, in hopes that he would lay ſome propoſals before his Majeſty for his royal approbation, in order to

* Charles Montagu, made Chancellor of the Exchequer in 1694, and afterwards created Baron, and at laſt Earl of Halifax.

ſatisfy the neceſſity of Mrs. Tillotſon's circumſtances, and that they might be diſpatched before the King's departure; ſince, as I apprehend, matters of this nature ſuffer extremely by delay, and meet with the beſt ſucceſs, when the ſenſe of their fitneſs makes the deepeſt impreſſion. The diſtance I live from town, and the averſion I have to be troubleſome to great men, makes me ignorant of what progreſs Mr. Chancellor has made, though I muſt own he expreſſed great zeal to the memory of the Archbiſhop, and profeſſed much readineſs and inclination to ſerve Mrs. Tillotſon.

"Your Lordſhip's generous procedure emboldens me to ſolicit the continuance of your favour, being confident, that your Lordſhip will receive a great deal of pleaſure from ſeeing that finiſhed, which your Lordſhip's great goodneſs has given a birth to. And if Mr. Montagu wants any incitement beſides your Lordſhip's example, your Lordſhip's conſtant owning Mrs. Tillotſon's cauſe will be an argument too powerful to be reſiſted. I have all the reſpect imaginable for your Lordſhip's poſt and character; but I muſt profeſs, 'tis the experience of your Lordſhip's perſonal merit, which creates the profoundeſt reſpect of, my Lord,

"Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient

"and moſt humble ſervant,

"NELSON.

"Blackheath, July, 1698."

CHAPTER II.

NELSON WITH THE NONJURORS.

Nelſon's acquaintance with the nonjuring Prelates.—His friendſhip with Kettlewell.—Letter to Archbiſhop Sharp reſpecting him.—His account of Kettlewell's ſickneſs and death.—He edits his works.—Ken's letter to Nelson.—Nelſon's friendſhip with Hickes.—Hickes' commendation and defence of Nelſon's writings.—Thos. Bowdler.—Nelſon's letter to Pepys.—Spinckes, Collier, and Lee.—The Shottiſbrooke Nonjurors.—Mr. Cherry of Shottiſbrooke House.—Brokeſby; his letter to Nelſon.—Dodwell; conſults with Ken and Nelſon on quitting the nonjuring Communion—His correſpondence with Burnet, publiſhed by Nelſon.—Nelſon's letter to a friend on quitting the nonjuring Communion.—He is received into the Eſtabliſhed Church by Archbiſhop Sharp.—His motives for the change.—Still continues a Jacobite.—Two letters to Mapletoft.—Nelſon reviews Harbin's Book on Hereditary Right.—Nelſon's letter to Bedford.—Nelſon preſents the book to Queen Ann.—Procures a mitigation of Bedford's ſentence.

Robert Nelson joined the nonjuring communion, as we have ſeen, on his return to England in 1691. He continued a member of that body, until the death of Biſhop Lloyd, in 1709, enabled him with a good conſcience to reſume communion with the prelates of the Eſtabliſhed Church. For the firſt eight years of this period he ſeems to have lived almoſt excluſively in the ſociety of Nonjurors, and in comparative retirement from public life; purſuing thoſe ſtudies and imbibing thoſe principles which prepared him to emerge at laſt to a poſition of eminent activity and uſefulneſs.

With the prelates indeed of the Nonjurors he does not ſeem to have had any very intimate acquaintance. Of Biſhops White and Turner no mention occurs in his correſpondence. Of Sancroft he writes * from the report of

* See his "Life of Bull," p. 355.

others more than from perſonal knowledge. With Biſhop Frampton of Glouceſter, his father's friend, he was upon terms of correſpondence.* With Biſhop Lloyd of Norwich he was aſſociated in a ſcheme for the relief of the neceſſitous Nonjurors. Biſhop Ken he had frequent opportunities of meeting at the houſe of their common friend, Mr. Cherry, and he correſponded with him in his retirement at Lord Weymouth's ſeat of Longleate. But his moſt intimate friends were to be found in a little nonjuring circle at London, which embraced Kettlewell and Hickes; Thomas Bowdler, his own and Hickes' neighbour in Ormond Street, and Pepys, under whom Bowdler had worked at the Admiralty; Collier and Spinckes; Francis Lee, to whom he entruſted his materials for the "Life of Kettlewell," and Hilkiah Bedford, with whom he reviewed Harbin's book on Hereditary Right, previous to its publication. While another knot of his intimates was ſettled at Shottiſbrooke, in Berkſhire, compriſing Mr. Cherry of Shottiſbrooke Houſe, Brokeſby his chaplain, and Dodwell the Camden Profeſſor of Hiſtory at Oxford.

For the meek and gentle-natured Kettlewell, Nelſon ſoon cultivated the warmeſt attachment, and found in him the boſom friend that he had loſt in Tillotſon. He had previouſly read ſome of Kettlewell's devotional works with much ſatisfaction, and now had recourſe to him to ſupply his ſpiritual needs. And this religious intercourſe between men of ſuch congenial temperament rapidly grew into the cloſeſt of friendſhip,

* "Pray let Dean Hicks know that I have received a letter from Biſhop Frampton, who ſays all the ſtories that are told of him in print are wicked lies. He has taken no oath nor has any been offered him; neither has he any aims or hopes of any preferments—his own out of which he was caſt, or any better. The beſt in England or in Europe are not able to move him in the leaſt; his hopes are placed on things above, not beneath. I give you his own words, and all that he writ me concerning my enquiry." Nelſon to Wanley, Oct. 18, 1701.

"So that Mr. Nelſon," ſays his friend Lee, "would always aſk Mr. Kettlewell's advice in everything of moment that he ſet about, and would unboſom himſelf to him in the niceſt and moſt difficult emergencies of life, that he might be directed by him; ſuch an opinion had he of his wiſdom, as well as of his integrity, in all that could be put to him. This ſacred friendſhip that was between them failed not to bring forth ſome conſiderable fruits both in the one and the other of them. For Mr. Nelſon did very much encourage Mr. Kettlewell to proceed in that ſoft and gentle manner wherein he excelled, of managing the matter in controverſy. And on the other hand, Mr. Kettlewell was, to the utmoſt of his power, ſerviceable to Mr. Nelſon, in whatever he could propoſe to him; but more particularly in ſtirring him up to exert himſelf generouſly for God, and to write for the honour of religion; which he thought might do much more good, as coming from a lay-gentleman, than it would from a profeſſed clergyman. And it is, indeed, to Mr. Kettlewell that we chiefly owe his firſt ſetting about his 'Companion for the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church,' as I remember to have heard from his own mouth, as also the putting it into that method wherein it is. And in the manner of publiſhing it he told me that he followed Mr. Kettlewell's directions altogether, whoſe wiſdom herein he much commended. And were it for nothing elſe than what this learned and religious gentleman did in the ſervice of the Church, and for the public acts and methods of charity which he recommended to him, Kettlewell's memory ought to be ever precious to the Church of England for the ſake of Nelſon, had he even not left ſo much as one page of his own writing to be known by."*

Among the plans of charity on which the two friends took counſel together was a propoſed bequeſt of Kettlewell's for the poor of his native place. Having no children of his own, he was deſirous of diſpoſing for charitable purpoſes of a ſmall freehold there, which he had inherited

* "Life of Kettlewell," pp. 435, 6.

from his father, and yet ſcrupled to bequeath it away from his brother Robert, without the ſanction and approval of his friend. Nelſon ſatisfied himſelf that competent proviſion was made for putting out in life the children, both of that brother and of a ſiſter who was but in poor circumſtances, and he then cheerfully adviſed with Kettlewell upon the beſt method of carrying out his charitable deſign.

"And I believe," he ſays, "there never was a ſettlement of that kind made with greater piety and prudence; and 'tis poſſible the world may ſee the whole at length, ſince it may ſerve to direct thoſe whoſe hearts God ſhall touch with ſuch charitable diſpoſitions."*

This laſt expreſſion will juſtify the introduction here of an account of the Charity and its founder, given by Nelſon in a letter to Archbiſhop Sharp, who had aſked him to communicate the particulars to Thoreſby, the Yorkſhire antiquary, then engaged in making collections for the hiſtory of his county.

"My Lord,—I am very much obliged to your Grace for the knowledge you have given me of Mr. Thoreſby. I was acquainted with his character as an eminent virtuoſo, but did not know that he excelled ſo much in piety and virtue, the much more valuable qualities. To ſatisfy that worthy gentleman in his inquiries relating to the Rev. Mr. John Kettlewell, I take the liberty to acquaint your Grace, that he was born at Brompton, a village in the pariſh of Northallerton, in the North Riding of Yorkſhire, the 10th of March, 1653. He was inſtructed in the rudiments of learning at the Free School of Northallerton, which had then been long in repute, on account of the maſter, Mr. Thos. Smelt, eſteemed in his time an excellent grammarian for Latin and Greek. Dr. William Palliſer, Archbiſhop of Caſhel, in Ireland, Dean Hickes,

* Preface to Five Diſcourſes by John Kettlewell, p. xv.

and the phyſician Dr. Radcliffe, were all taught by the ſame maſter. In 1670, Mr. Kettlewell was placed at St. Edmund's Hall in Oxford, and in 1675, removed to Lincoln College, where he was choſe a Fellow the ſaid year. He was preſented to Coleſhill living in Warwickſhire, by Simon Lord Digby, in 1682, of which he was afterwards deprived for not taking the Oaths of Allegiance to King William and Queen Mary. He died at London, the 12th April, 1695, and in his lifetime made a ſettlement of a farm known by the name of Low Fields, in Brompton, rent 25*l.* a-year, for Charitable uſes to the poor of Northallerton and Brompton, which are reduced to ſix heads.

"Firſt, the truſtees are required, as often as need ſhall be, to lay out yearly two pounds ten ſhillings, to buy Bibles, Common Prayer Books, and the Whole Duty of Man, or ſome brief explication of the Creed, or ſuch little practical books, as the miniſter for the time being ſhall think moſt convenient, the pooreſt families firſt to be provided, before any diſtribution ſhall be made to particular perſons.

"Secondly, they ſhall employ five pounds yearly in phyſic, and in things neceſſary to recover health, if the poor ſhall want it.

"Thirdly, they ſhall employ five pounds yearly for cloaks for poor widows, or other poor houſekeepers as are in want and have been induſtrious and faithful, when able to work, and have conſtantly frequented the Church, and are of ſober and peaceable demeanour among their neighbours, not given to go about as evil-ſpeakers, or buſybodies in other people's matters, nor to pilfering, ſcolding, drunkenneſs or other miſbehaviour.

"Fourthly, they are to employ one pound yearly for inſtructing poor girls and boys and to fit them to be ſervants.

"They are to employ ſix pounds yearly for apprenticing one boy, the ſon of ſome poor perſon inhabiting the ſame town. He ought to be fatherleſs or motherleſs, or both, one that can ſay the whole Church Catechiſm without book, that can read and caſt accounts, who has behaved himſelf reverently in Church, dutifully to his parents,

reſpectfully to his ſuperiors and is not given to ſwearing, lying, or obſcene language, but by his good behaviour doth give juſt hopes of his future good converſation.

"Sixthly, the truſtees have further a power to apply part of the rent towards the educating any very promiſing youth of theſe towns at the Univerſity for four years, provided his friends are not able to ſupport him; upon condition he demean himſelf there piouſly, ſoberly and ſtudiouſly, whereof they ſhall require a certificate from the tutor once a year; and if by ſufficient teſtimony it appears that he ſpends his time unprofitably or fall into ill courſes, his allowance ſhall be withdrawn.

"In the ſettlement there are admirable directions for the management of this Charity; and it concludes with exhortations to the careful management of charities, as a good inſtance of charity itſelf.

"If I can be any way further ſerviceable to gratify the curioſity of Mr. Thoreſby, your Grace may command me with all imaginable freedom, being with very great reſpect, my Lord, your Grace's

"Moſt obedient humble ſervant,

"ROBERT NELSON.*"

"Ormond Street,
"4th Sept. 1708."

Another charitable deſign in which Nelſon and Kettlewell were aſſociated, was a ſcheme for the relief of the extreme want to which many of the deprived clergy with their wives and families, were now reduced. Kettlewell drew up a plan for the collection and diſtribution of the fund, and Nelſon forwarded it, three months before the death of his friend, to Biſhop Lloyd and his brethren; who, in purſuance of it, united in that formal appeal to the charity of the public, for which they were ſummoned to give

* Miſcellaneous Papers of Dr. Birch, Brit. Mus. 4297. This letter has been headed by the Copyiſt, "From Robert Nelſon to Archbiſhop *Teniſon*." But a reference to Thoreſby's Correſpondence, iv. 110, will ſhow that it was addreſſed to Archbiſhop Sharp of York.

account before the Privy Council, as for an attempted exercise of that episcopal authority of which they had been deprived by law.

Before the Bishops had issued their letter, one of its projectors had departed to the world where charity has its perfect work. The friendship of Kettlewell and Nelson proved but of brief duration, and little more than three years after their first acquaintance, it was terminated by the decease of the former, April 6, 1695. He was confined to his house in London for six months before his death, and Nelson, who now resided at Blackheath, had many opportunities of conversing with his dying friend and noting his Christian resignation and preparedness for his end. "I visited him,"* writes Nelson to their common friend, Dean Hickes, when the latter was collecting materials for a Biography of 'Coleshill's Saint:'

"I visited him very often, because I found it grateful to him; not but that I was very desirous of it too, being sensible how short a time I was like to enjoy so advantageous a conversation. However, out of respect I should have forborn, if he had not suffered me with a great deal of willingness.

"He had an entire trust and confidence in God, and would often say that God was able if he thought fit to restore him to his health again notwithstanding his great weakness, and that his medicines seemed to give him no encouragement, but that according to appearances his distemper was likely to end in his death. But as to the issues of life and death he referred it wholly to God, who knew what was best for him. He appeared to me neither desirous of life, nor afraid of dying, but wholly resigned his will to the will of God; and notwithstanding the well-grounded and comfortable hopes he had of a blessed immortality, he never wished to have

* "Life of Kettlewell," pp. 448, et seqq.

his pains ſhortened, nor the time of diſſolution haſtened, but was entirely reſigned to what Providence ſhould determine.

"I was once enquiring into ſome particulars of his paſt life, with a deſign of getting materials towards the aſſiſtance of ſuch as ſhould undertake to write it. He apprehending what I drove at, ſaid to me, 'Mr. Nelſon, it matters not that the world ſhould be acquainted with the particulars of my life, they will be all laid open at the Day of Judgment, and then 'twill be time enough to have them known.'

"He carried himſelf with great decency to thoſe that attended him; his wife never did the leaſt thing for him but he returned her thanks, as he did likewiſe upon ſeveral occaſions to his ſervant that was always about him; which was a great maſtery in ſuch a languiſhing diſtemper, to overcome that peeviſhneſs which too ordinarily attends it.

"I never found him in a murmuring complaining temper, but when he was worſt he would always find out ſome favourable circumſtances for which he would thank God; if he had not ſlept, he would thank God he had lain quiet and had not been reſtleſs; if he had coughed much he would thank God he had had refreſhing ſleeps between his fits of coughing. He would always make the beſt of what he ſuffered, and was thankful that it was not worſe, ſo far from being diſcontented that 'twas so bad. He gave as little trouble as he could, and would ſuffer no body to watch with him, till a night or two before he died.

"I found him once very much concerned about the debates then on foot concerning the doctrine of the bleſſed Trinity; he was extreamly ſcandalized at the manner of managing that profound myſtery; 'What,' ſays he, 'ſhall they make this article of our faith, this profound myſtery of our religion of which a Chriſtian ſhould never ſpeak or think without the greateſt awe and veneration imaginable, a topick to vent their wit and ſcurrility upon, an occaſion to expoſe one another, and gratify the enemies of our common Chriſtianity!'

"He was not leſs ſcandalized with the funeral ſermons that were ſtuffed with ſuch fulſome panegyricks; it grieved him to the ſoul to ſee flattery take ſanctuary in the pulpit, when religion baniſhes it from common converſation.

"He preſerved a great charity for thoſe that differed from him; he would often ſay he did not care to ſpeak of peoples perſons, and though he would freely condemn ſuch and ſuch practices, he was more reſerved in cenſuring thoſe that did them. He knew a great deal of good of many men whoſe conduct he was not ſatisfied with upon this revolution.

"He blamed mightily the indifferency with which ſeveral of the ſwearing clergy treated the matters that were in controverſy between them and us. Having heard that ſeveral of them had never read the moſt conſiderable books writ on our ſide; upon this ſubject he once broke out into this prayer. 'Let not their errors ſeparate between them and God's favour, give them, O Lord, teachable minds, deſirous to ſee the truth and willing to embrace it.' He looked on them, as he ſaid, 'with the bowells of a brother, not with the inſults and triumphs of an enemy.'

"He approved not of that bitterneſs and heat of temper which he met with in ſome of his deprived brethren; for ſufferings being apt of their own nature to ſharpen mens minds, he thought men ought to be particularly on the guard againſt it, as the peculiar temptation that attended their circumſtances; and would often ſay, that a Chriſtian demeanour under ſufferings was as neceſſary as a good cauſe to render them acceptable to God.

* * * *

"On Thurſday morning the eleventh of April '95, he apprehended himſelf departing, and ſaid to Mr. Bell the miniſter that attended him; 'I am now entring upon my laſt labour, the Lord gave and he is now taking away; and for that he is now taking away, bleſſed be the name of the Lord. For I thank my God, I am going without any diſtruſt, without the leaſt miſgiving, to a place of reſt, joy and everlaſting bliſs. There is no life like a happy death; I have endeavour'd even from my youth to

approve myſelf as a faithful ſervant to my great Maſter; I have taken ſome pains in writing ſeveral books, I have ſeriouſly conſidered them, and am fully ſatisfied (looking on thoſe about him) that you may find in them the way to Heaven; the Chriſtian duties contained therein have been my practice as well as ſtudy, and now I find the advantage of it. Therefore, be all of you carefull to read them often, and ſeriouſly, and live ſuitably thereunto, that when you come to the condition I am now in, you may dye with comfort as you ſee me do: I have ſome little pain indeed, but my pain is nothing ſo extraordinary as my hopes; for I have earneſtly repented of all my ſins, and verily believe that through the tender mercies of my God, and merits of my bleſſed Saviour Jeſus Chriſt, I ſhall be carried up into Abraham's boſom.' After which he made this ſhort prayer: 'I wait, O God, for that everlaſting reſt which I want at preſent, but ſhall not long: I am ready when thou my God calleſt for me, yet can ſtay with patience till thou pleaſeſt, for thy time is the beſt time, and thy pleaſure the beſt pleaſure.'

"After ſome of the prayers of church, and the commendatory one which he particularly deſired, he gave a nephew of his, one John Davil, who was about fifteen years old, and of whoſe education he had taken the charge and care, ſome advice in ſeveral particulars; as, 1. To obſerve all the commandments of God, for he that breaks one is guilty of the breach of all, for the wrath of God is revealed againſt all ungodlineſs, &c. 2. To deſpiſe and contemn the world, that is, let not the profits nor pleaſures of it allure or tempt you; nor let fear of danger affright you from any Chriſtian duty, but have a perfect dependance upon God, for he is a kind, merciful and a good God, I have found him to be ſo. 3. To be humble, mild and meek, to have candour and charity, &c. Then be dehorted him from all vice, as from pride, paſſion, and diſſimulation, hypocriſy, lying. Of which laſt he ſaid, do not tell a lye, no not to ſave a world, not to ſave your king, nor your ſelf. Next he gave his ſiſter ſome directions of the like nature, how to teach and inſtruct her children. His brother coming in, he told him wherein he had given

him offence, forgave him heartily and prayed for him and his; then he ſaid, 'Brother, have I done you any wrong, tell me, for if I have, I am ready and willing to make compenſation,' being anſwered 'No,' he put the ſame queſtion to ſeveral others preſent, for, ſaid he, 'I am now going to offer my gift upon the altar, therefore if my brother has ought againſt me, I muſt firſt be reconciled to my brother and then offer my gift.'

"The afternoon before he died he was pleaſed to acknowledge my friendſhip towards him; but ſaid his wife had no reaſon to expect the ſame to her. I knew his concern for her, and gave him all the aſſurances of treating her as the relict of one whom I greatly eſteemed, and dearly loved. Some little time after this he turned to me as I ſat by his bedſide, and in a voice which I could hardly hear, ſaid, 'Mr. Nelſon, 'tis brave to go to a place where one can enjoy a friend, without fear of loſing him; where every thing is agreeable, becauſe neither ſin nor ſorrow enter; where there needs no ſun to ſhine, for as much as God is the light of that place, and every ſaint is a ſtar, each ones bliſs is felt by every bleſſed inhabitant, and happineſs is diſpenſed by a bleſſed circulation.' He added ſomething more about the New Jeruſalem, and the heavenly ſtate, which I loſt by the lowneſs of his voice, and his difficulty in ſpeaking. The ſame afternoon he deſired his wife to read to him out of his book of Death, which ſhe did at two ſeveral times; at which he was extraordinary devout, and very thankful to her, according to his uſual cuſtom, for her aſſiſtance. After this he called her to him, and ſaid, 'Child, truſt God with thy ſelf; I truſt him with thee freely. God's providence is the beſt protection: and there is no ſuch way to engage his good providence as by truſting Him.' Some time the ſame afternoon ſhe aſked him how he did; he anſwered her, 'Very praiſe-worthy well, I thank God, for one near departing.' The prayers in the laſt agonies were read to him, at his deſire, out of that book which was made the companion of his ſickneſs, and which was the laſt effort of his charity for the ſalvation of his brethren. He ſunk all of a ſudden; for being raiſed to

take ſome chocolate for his re-freſhment, he died in a moment in that poſture."

Kettlewell was buried at Allhallows Barking, where the body of Archbiſhop Laud had been interred, and of which Hickes had been one time rector. His wife was made ſole executrix of his will, but ſhe was directed to diſpoſe of his books and MSS. with the approbation and by the advice of his good friend Mr. Nelſon; and the latter accordingly acted as literary executor to his friend.* In this capacity he firſt publiſhed a volume of "Five Diſcourſes," which had been left by Kettlewell ready for the preſs; himſelf prefixing a preface, in which he ſketched the character of the author, and announced a forthcoming memoir "by a very ſkilful and maſterly hand," (apparently Dr. Hickes), "who will ſet this pattern of Chriſtianity in its true light, and convey him down to poſterity in his full proportion." Nelſon forwarded the volume upon its publication to Biſhop Ken, and received the following acknowledgment in return.†

"Sir.—I received the book, which I imagined came from you, and for which I return you many thanks; and ſince that your obliging letter came to my hands. You have done an honour to the memory of my dead friend, which we all ought to acknowledge; and I am very glad that his life is writing by another hand, as you tell me. He was certainly as ſaint-like a man as ever I knew; and his books are demonſtrations of it, which are as full of as ſolid and ſearching a piety as ever I read. God was pleaſed to take him from the evil to come to his own infinite advantage, but to our great loſs. His bleſſed will be done! Since the date of your letter a new ſcene has been

* Nelſon has been incorrectly ſaid to have been appointed Executor.

† "Kettlewell's Life," Appendix, No. 25.—Superſcribed, "For his worthy friend Mr. Nelſon, at his houſe on Blackheath;" and endorſed by Nelſon, "Biſhop Kenn's teſtimony about Mr. Kettlewell."

opened; and if the Act paſſes which is now upon the anvil, I preſume the priſons will be filled with the malcontents; and your friend, though innocent and inoffenſive, yet apprehends he may ſhare in the calamity; and, foreſeeing it, it will be no ſurprize to him. In reſpect of that ſort of men, I have always been of the mind of the Prophet, that their ſtrength is to ſit ſtill. And ſo it will be found at the long run. And 'tis the wiſeſt and moſt dutiful way, to follow rather than to anticipate Providence, &c. I commend you all to God's moſt gracious protection.

"Good Sir,

"Your very affectionate ſervant,

"[Thos. B. & W.]"

"March 2, $169\frac{5}{6}$."

In the following year Nelſon publiſhed an "Office for Priſoners" which Kettlewell had alſo finiſhed for the preſs; and from which we learn that attention was even then being directed to the moral atmoſphere of our gaols, and that charitable and compaſſionate perſons were found to viſit the inmates, and put religious books into their hands. In 1704, another unpubliſhed MS. of Kettlewell's came into Nelſon's hands; viz., a letter upon Profuſeneſs of expenditure, which he had addreſſed by way of expoſtulation to a gentleman of his acquaintance, in 1681, and which Nelſon conſidered calculated to do ſervice among the higher claſſes, by impreſſing upon them the reſponſibility of wealth. And in 1712 he edited a third edition of Kettlewell's "Practical Believer," with a preface, and ſome additions that Kettlewell had prepared, concerning the proportion between ſin and puniſhment, and upon the eternity of hell torments, in animadverſion of Tillotſon's heterodox diſcourſe on thoſe points. He had alſo thought at one time of preparing a memoir of Kettlewell, and when neither he nor Hickes had found leiſure to do that juſtice

to the memory of their friend, he entruſted the materials that he had collected (but a few days before his laſt ſickneſs) to his friend Dr. Francis Lee, who at laſt accompliſhed the long-delayed taſk, and ſent his "Memoirs of the Life of Kettlewell" to the preſs in 1718.

Nelſon's friendſhip with Kettlewell introduced him to the acquaintance of Hickes, who ſoon ſucceeded to the place in his affections which had been held by Tillotſon and Kettlewell. Nelſon was one of thoſe affectionate natures who muſt always have a friend, and his perſonal eſteem for Hickes was deepened by the higheſt reſpect for his varied learning, and by deference for his theological judgment. Upon leaving Blackheath, he became Hickes's near neighbour in Ormond Street, and continued in almoſt daily intercourſe with him for the laſt eleven years of his life. Some mention of "my neighbour the Dean" is rarely omitted from his more familiar letters. In his "Life of Bull," he ſpeaks of him as;—

"My very learned and worthy friend, that great maſter of eccleſiaſtical antiquity, and the moſt conſiderable reviver of primitive theology that hath appeared in our times. Tho' he is admirably ſkilled in other parts of uſeful learning, yet he hath laboured with great ſucceſs in untrodden paths, a certain mark of a great genius, whereby the utmoſt parts of Europe will have an occaſion to celebrate his profound erudition. But he excelleth in his own profeſſion, having built his ſtudy of divinity upon the Holy Scriptures, and the primitive fathers of the church as the beſt expoſitors of thoſe ſacred writings; and hath thereby created ſuch a regard to antiquity in the generation of young divines that are now riſing among us, that we may hope to ſee the next age preſerved from the infection of thoſe latitudinarian principles which have ſo much prevailed in this. His readineſs to communicate his knowledge, draweth an application to him from men of the greateſt figure for their talents, and renders his friendſhip a true

and valuable bleſſing. But above all, the ſolid and ſubſtantial piety of his conduct maketh his example a conſtant inſtruction to thoſe who live within the reach of it.*

The deprived Dean, on his part, loſt no opportunity of publicly commending the publications of Robert Nelſon, and of boaſting of his acquaintance with one, who was the object of univerſal admiration and eſteem, and whoſe character could not but reflect the greateſt honour upon the nonjuring communion, to which he had attached himſelf. Hickes's "Firſt Collection of Letters† with a Popiſh Prieſt" was dedicated to Nelſon "as a matter of neceſſity," he ſays, rather than of choice;

"For you know the gentleman, who drew me againſt my inclination into this controverſy: I acquainted you time after time with the ſteps of my proceeding in it with him, and his ſiſter; and I deſired, had I come to oral conference with their guide, to have you ſole witneſs on my ſide to what had paſſed between us in all our arguments. And for theſe reaſons I think myſelf obliged to make you a publick preſent of theſe papers of controverſy, with that deference which is due to ſo diſcerning and learned a judge, with all the reſpect that ought to be paid to ſo great an ornament of our church and religion, and with all the acknowledgments I ought to make for the honour of your friendſhip, which I eſteem as one of the providential bleſſings of my life, that God has been pleaſed to reſerve to me as a comfort in the laſt and moſt tireſome part thereof.

"In all the converſation I have had with you I can truly ſay, I have found you fully anſwer the great and good character that my learned and religious friend of venerable memory, Mr. Kettlewell, gave me of you, many years before it was my happineſs to be acquainted with you. The love and eſteem he had for you was to my knowledge exceeding

* "Life of Bull," pp. 514, 5.

† "Several Letters which paſſed between Dr. George Hickes and a Popiſh Prieſt upon occaſion of a young gentlewoman's departing from the Church of England to that of Rome." 1705.

great while he lived, and at his death he gave you a ſure teſtimony of his conſtancy in the honourable opinion he had of you in committing his worldly concerns to your wiſdom and truſt. Sir, I cannot pretend to merit your friendſhip to ſuch a degree as that worthy perſon deſerved it, who was one of the beſt of Chriſtians and divines; but I dare pretend to the ſame degree of affection and reſpect, which he had for you to his laſt breath, and in teſtimony thereof I humbly offer this book to your acceptance, profeſſing myſelf ambitious of being reckoned and continued in the number of your moſt faithful friends and ſervants."

In another preface,* Hickes gives a liſt of "very many learned gentlemen of the laity, true ſons of the Church of England, who, with invincible ſtrength of reaſon, and great variety of learning, have defended their mother in her doctrine, worſhip, polity, diſcipline, prieſthood, and revenues, againſt her open and ſecret enemies of all ſorts and ſects;" and cloſes it with the name of "that worthy gentleman, Mr. Nelſon, in his 'Companion to the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church.'"

"His great worth and talent are known everywhere by that moſt excellent book, which is received with the higheſt commendation in all places. For beſides the acceptance it hath in a ſhort time found at home in ſo many editions, it is now tranſlating abroad into ſeveral foreign languages, for the benefit of the public where thoſe languages are ſpoken. To this book I muſt add that of 'the Great Duty of frequenting the Chriſtian Sacrifice,' to which is prefixed an Exerciſe upon Confirmation, and the 'Life of Dr. George Bull, late lord biſhop of St. David's.'" †

In another work,‡ when Hickes is animadverting himſelf

* "Three Short Treatiſes, &c., now again publiſhed by Dr. George Hickes, in defence of the Prieſthood and true rights of the Church." 1709.

† "Several Letters which paſſed," &c., 2nd edit. 1715. Preface, p. 10.

‡ "An Apologetical Vindication of the Church of England," by George Hickes, D.D. 2nd ed. 1706. Preface.

on Mr. Stephens' pamphlet on Church Communion, he calls attention to the reply of his friend, as "a very solid, learned, and plain short answer to it, of which I think myself obliged to take notice, because it is an antidote against all the poison of his book." He answers Tindal's appeal to the laity, to support him in his attacks on the Christian priesthood, by instancing* Robert Nelson as "another gentleman of the laity, who is the reverse to him in his writings about the church and priesthood, even as much reverse to him, I had almost said, as good itself is to evil, or a good to an evil angel." He indignantly rebuts Dr. Hancock's reflection† on "one of the most eminent and venerable gentlemen of his time, and most eminent writer of devotions, whose books have been received in so many editions, for which he hath had the thanks and prayers of the generality of the clergy and laity, I mean Mr. Nelson, against whom he directs these words in the Preface of his Answer: 'But to bring these notices into books of devotion, as a certain ingenious gentleman hath lately done, is a still greater sign of their zeal in this matter.'" He goes on to complain‡ that the doctrine of the Eucharistic Sacrifice had disappeared from the writings, even of divines, who have treated on the subject, and "this was perhaps the pious reason why Mr. Nelson endeavoured to retrieve this primitive word and notion, by bringing the one into the title-page, and the other into the devotions of his book. For he that knew *Id verum quod prius*, might think he could not more honour God, or better serve his church, or more benefit his readers in writing on that subject, than by

* "Two Treatises on the Christian Priesthood, and on the Dignity of the Episcopal Order, with a prefatory discourse in answer to a book entitled the 'Rights of the Christian Church.'" 1847. vol. i. p. 313.

† "A Second Collection of Controversial Letters relating to the Church of England and the Church of Rome, as they passed between an honourable lady and Dr. George Hickes, &c." 1710. Preface.

‡ Ibid, p. 57.

reſtoring the ſacrifice to the ſacrament, which had kept poſſeſſion in the churches of God for 1500 years, and was a notion ſo proper to explain the ſpecial nature of that myſtery, as alſo to inflame the devotion of the faithful, and encreaſe their veneration for the ſacrament and the whole miniſtration thereof." In another place Hickes aſſures* Biſhop Trimnel of Norwich, who had been branding it in his Charge (1710) as a High-Church error, "that there are very many more of the beſt authority and reputation, both among the clergy and laity too, beſides Mr. Nelſon, who believe this doctrine." And he indignantly remonſtrates† with the author of an anonymous pamphlet (ſuppoſed to be White Kennett) for taunting Nelſon with his Jacobitiſm, and for aſcribing to the ſecret partiality of Nonjurors the encomiums which were heaped upon his book. "Could he ſo inſidiouſly reflect upon Mr. Sharp,‡ for ſo often citing and commending Mr. Nelſon's book, as to ſuggeſt he did it becauſe he admired him upon another account? Certainly, Mr. Sharp had all the reaſon imaginable to mention that gentleman and his book with all reſpect, and to praiſe him (were there no other reaſons) for the ſake of his excellent performance in it, which hath already been ſo well received in five ſeveral editions, and will have many more. But Dr. Kennet is no ſtranger to the ſingular worth of that gentleman, who ſpends his time and eſtate in promoting the temporal and ſpiritual happineſs of men, and is a member of the ſame ſociety with himſelf for propagating Chriſtian knowledge; and therefore it is not credible he could be ſo mean and ſo malicious as to inſult him on that other account."§ Not even the conformity of Nelſon to the

* "Two Treatiſes, &c.," vol. i. p. 4.

† "A Second Collection of Controverſial Letters." Preface, p. 68.

‡ A High-Church clergyman at Stepney.

§ Kennett faintly denies the authorſhip of the Tract, and complains in turn: "He accuſes me of being ſo mean and malicious as to inſult Mr.

eſtabliſhed church in 1709, ſeems to have impaired the intimacy of his friendſhip with the leader of the Nonjurors; and their mutual perſonal attachment, together with the coincidence of their political predilections and their theological opinions, ſeems to have kept them united in the cloſeſt friendſhip till the death of Nelſon but one year before his friend.

Another nonjuring acquaintance of Nelſon, and alſo his neighbour in Ormond Street, was Mr. Thomas Bowdler, at the death of whoſe wife in 1713, we find Nelſon acting as pall-bearer in company with the Earl of Winchelſea, Captain Hatton, and Sir Anthony Deane, his friend Spinckes reading the ſervice at her grave.*

Through Hickes or Bowdler, Nelſon may have gained the acquaintance of the well-known Samuel Pepys, who had been the truſted agent of James II. at the Admiralty, and who ſtill continued the ſecret partiſan of the exiled monarch; who was now in his old age endeavouring to repent of the worldly vicious life, which in his Diary he has ſo unbluſhingly pourtrayed, and who begged Nelſon's advice in the ſelection of a ſpiritual guide from the ranks of the nonjuring clergy. His requeſt brought him the following reply:—†

"Blackheath, March 2, 1702-3.

"Sir,—I have not been unmindful of your commands, neither can I ever neglect what is enjoined me by ſo worthy a friend, but it required ſome time to receive

Nelſon; when I preſume that worthy gentleman will acquit me of any intention of that kind. He is again miſtaken in a matter of fact of no importance, but only to ſhow his little regard for truth. He ſays I am a member of the ſame Society with Mr. Nelſon for Propagating Chriſtian Knowledge. I ſhould not be aſhamed of being ſo, but there are ſome reaſons why I am not ſo, and why I have not been ſo for ſeveral years, as the late Secretary, Mr. Wanley, will teſtify." MSS. Collection, Brit. Mus. vol. xvi., p. 310.

* "Life of John Bowdler, Eſqr." 1825. p. 13.

† "Diary and Correſpondence of Samuel Pepys." 3rd edition. 1849. vol. v. p. 421.

ſuch an account of that matter as I might depend upon. After the ſtricteſt enquiry, I find none of our clergy placed in your neighbourhood nearer than Mitcham, where lives one Mr. Higden, a very ingenious perſon, who married the late Lord Stowell's ſiſter, but I believe you may have one with greater eaſe from London, by reaſon of the conveniency of public conveyances. Our friend Dean Hickes is at preſent at Oxford; but if you will be pleaſed whenever your occaſions require it, to ſend to Mr. Spinckes, who has the honour of being known to you, he will be ſure to wait upon you and take ſuch meaſures that you may always be ſupplied, whenever you ſtand in need of ſuch aſſiſtance. He lodges at a glazier's in Wincheſter Street, near London Wall.

"You will pardon me, Sir, if I take this occaſion to acquaint you with a pious work, which is now carrying on by the joint aſſiſtance of our nobility and gentry, as well as of the biſhop and clergy. The States of Holland have conſented that the Church of England worſhip ſhould be eſtabliſhed at Rotterdam; and that it may be performed with due ſolemnity, there is a deſign encouraged of building a Church in that place, which by eſtimate, will coſt 3500*l.*; 1000*l.* of that ſum muſt be borrowed to lay the foundation: it will be no ſurpriſe to you who are acquainted with that ſituation. The general officers have contributed beyond expectation, (military men having very ſeldom any great zeal in ſuch matters), a great number of the nobility and gentry having taken this occaſion to ſhow their zeal for the Church. The Duke of Marlborough has given it his particular countenance, and the expectation of 500*l.* from the Queen. I need not forbear laying this matter before you, whom God has bleſſed with ſuch a plentiful fortune, which you know how to diſpoſe of to the beſt advantage, and ſuch as will turn you to good account at the great day; and withall I beg that Mr. Hewer may be acquainted with this pious deſign, which will contribute ſo much to God's glory and the honor of the Church. I do moſt heartily wiſh you health and eaſe; but if the Providence of God thinks fit to try you with the want of both, that you may find the comfort of Religion under all

your afflictions, and may make his will your choice and ſatisfaction.

"I am, with great reſpect,

"Your moſt faithful, humble ſervant,

"R. Nelson."

With the Rev. Nathaniel Spinckes, whom he mentions in the above letter, Nelſon had probably been brought into contact at the bed-ſide of Kettlewell. To him was committed the management of the fund, which was raiſed by the deprived Biſhops, at the propoſition of Nelſon and Kettlewell, for relieving the neceſſities of their clergy. And in Nelſon's will he is entruſted with a ſum of money for their wants. With the more celebrated Collier, Nelſon is ſhown to have been on terms of intimacy, by a minute of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, on the 25th September, 1712, when he reports:—

"That he had according to the deſire of the Society endeavoured to engage Mr. Collier to prepare a Treatiſe on the Abuſe of Muſic; but that he was informed Mr. Collier was at preſent ſo taken up in finiſhing his 'Eccleſiaſtical Hiſtory,' that he was obliged by his bookſellers not to undertake any other work till that was finiſhed."

The firſt volume of this remarkable work had appeared in 1708, and he was ſtill engaged upon the ſecond, which did not make its appearance till 1714. In each volume we find the name of "Robert Nelſon, Esq., Ormond Street," as a ſubſcriber.

In the ſame rank for piety and learning with Spinckes and Collier, muſt be placed the leſs known name of Francis Lee, M.D.,* who loſt his Fellowſhip at St. John's, Oxford,

* See *Ἀπολειπόμενα*, or Diſſertations, Theological, Mathematical, and Phyſical; with a critical commentary on the moſt difficult paſſages of the

at the Revolution, and going abroad, practiſed phyſic at Venice for two years, with much ſucceſs. Upon his return in 1694, he joined a Society of Myſtics, and married the daughter of Mrs. Lead, the propheteſs of the ſect, reſiding with his mother-in-law at Hoxton. This woman claimed the diſtinction of converſing with God and good ſpirits, and pretended a Divine revelation in favour (among other points) of the finite character of hell torments. Dodwell in vain endeavoured to recover his friend from the deluſion in a correſpondence which extended over ſeveral years. But Lee, at length convinced of his error, abandoned his aſſociates and attacked their principles in his "Hiſtory of Montaniſm," which appeared with a Preface by Hickes, in 1709. He had for ſome years before enjoyed the friendſhip of Nelſon, and to him, as well as to Kettlewell and Brokeſby, has been aſcribed a ſhare in Nelſon's palmary work on the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church.

"The greater part," writes his biographer, "of Mr. Nelſon's Feaſts and Faſts, I found in his own hand after his deceaſe. He was the firſt that put Mr. Hoare and Mr. Nelſon upon the founding of Charity Schools, upon the ſame plan as that of Halle in Germany, and was continually encouraging and promoting all manner of charities, both public and private. But his chief aim was for healing the breaches, and for the reunion of all the divided branches among thoſe that call themſelves Chriſtians, according to the apoſtolical rule and ſtandard of the primitive church, before any innovations were crept into either the Eaſtern or Weſtern Churches."

Book of Geneſis, wherein the divine authority of Moſes is vindicated againſt the objections of all Sceptics, Deiſts, and other infidels. To which are prefixed a ſhort account of the Author, propoſals given to Peter the Great, Czar of Muſcovy, for the right framing of his government, and a ſecond edition of the Diſſertation upon the ſecond Apochryphal Book of Eſdras. By the late pious and learned Francis Lee, M.D., in 2 volumes. 1752.

See alſo Mr. C. Walton's valuable and intereſting "Notes and Materials for an adequate Biography of William Law." Printed for private circulation, 1854. And Wilſon's "Hiſtory of Merchant Taylors' School," p. 955.

He was called Rabbi Lee, on account of his great learning. He was treated with much conſideration by Harley, when Lord High Treaſurer, and was allowed to tender to him ſchemes for the improvement of the American Colonies, and the regulation of our gaols; he had plans for taking care of all vagrant and deſtitute perſons as in Holland, and for ſupplying the neceſſities of thoſe who from the paſt reſpectability of their poſition, are aſhamed to let their wants be known. To Lee, as it has been ſaid, Nelſon and Hickes entruſted the materials they had collected for the Life of Kettlewell. He was much with Nelſon during the few laſt months of his life, attended his dying bed, and received a legacy of 50*l.* in his will.

In addition to the Jacobite circle in which Nelſon moved in London, he had alſo an intimate acquaintance with a little body of nonjuring friends, who were ſettled at Shottiſbrooke, in Berkſhire.

At their head was Francis Cherry, Eſq., of Shottiſbrooke Houſe,* a country gentleman of family and landed eſtate, whoſe worth and hoſpitality, combined with genteel accompliſhments, and a handſome perſon, procured him the ſame popularity in his county, which Nelſon enjoyed in the circles of town life, and rendered him, Nonjuror as he was, "the idol of Berkſhire." His houſe, in which he was able to make up ſeventy beds for the officers and ſoldiery who were quartered upon him at the Revolution, was always open to the deprived clergy, and became a complete hotel for friendſhip, learning and diſtreſs. Biſhop Ken divided his time between Longleate and Shottiſbrooke Houſe. Bowdler and his family were frequent gueſts; and Nelſon would frequently ride over from Lord Berkeley's at Cranford. Dr. Grabe always found a welcome there. Charles Leſlie, diſguiſed in regimentals, was

* See Preface to Monck Berkeley's Poems, 1797; pp. 418, &c.

concealed by Mr. Cherry for ſix months, at a houſe belonging to him in the neighbourhood, at White Waltham; and it was at Cherry's requeſt and expenſe that he repaired to Bar-le-duc, to attempt the converſion of the Pretender. His devotion to the Jacobite cauſe was diſplayed upon one occaſion in a ſomewhat ſingular manner. Among the accompliſhments on which he prided himſelf as a country gentleman was his ſuperior horſemanſhip, the diſplay of which in the hunting-field would ſometimes pique the emulation of King William. And Mr. Cherry, obſerving one day, that he was cloſely preſſed by the King, riſked his life, for the chance of breaking the uſurper's neck, and plunged into a frightfully deep and broad part of the Thames, in hope that William might be induced to follow. To the Princeſs Anne upon a hunting-day he would always pay the moſt particular attention, riding up to her calaſh; but when ſhe aſſumed her father's crown, the queen miſſed Mr. Cherry from her ſide, and pointed him out in the diſtance to her attendants: "There goes one of the honeſteſt gentlemen in my dominions."

Among the friends whom Nelſon met at Mr. Cherry's was the Rev. Francis Brokeſby,* who had been deprived of his living of Rowley, near Hull, in 1691, after having held it for twenty years; and who, after ſeveral removals from place to place, found a final reſting-place in the houſe of Mr. Cherry, who entertained him as his chaplain. Here he became acquainted with Dodwell and Nelſon. He alſo is ſaid to have aſſiſted Nelſon in the compoſition of Feſtivals and Faſts to ſuch an extent, that his own family attributed to him the real authorſhip of the book. He took an eager intereſt in Nelſon's religious and charitable undertakings, and addreſſed† to him in 1708, a letter

* See Nicholl's "Leiceſterſhire," vol. iv. pt. 2, p. 737, &c.

† "Some Propoſals toward promoting the Propagation of the Goſpel in our

upon the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, the account of the designs and operations of that Society having just come into his hands. "Silver and gold have I none," exclaimed the deprived Nonjuror, "to put into your treasury; and I find I have nothing else beside my prayers to contribute hereunto, but employing my thoughts about it." But Brokesby's name is better known by his account* of the Life and Writings of his friend Dodwell, which he dedicated to Robert Nelson, "in grateful acknowledgment," he says, "of your favours, and to tell the world I am one of those whom your extensive benevolence has reached."

Henry Dodwell was the most distinguished, in point of learning, of the nonjuring residents at Shottisbrooke, and exercised the greatest influence upon Nelson's life. He had been deprived at the Revolution of the Camdenian Professorship of History at Oxford, and he continued till his death a conscientious adherent of the exiled family. But he did not consider that such political differences formed a sufficient ground for continued ecclesiastical separation. He had adhered to the communion of the deprived bishops, as his rightful spiritual fathers; but he was not prepared to see the schism perpetuated after their death, by the consecration of nonjuring bishops in their room. Accordingly, upon the decease of Bishop Lloyd, in 1709, he wrote to Bishop Ken, the only survivor of the deprived prelates, to inquire whether he claimed his adherence; and Bishop

American Plantations. Humbly offered in a letter to Mr. Nelson, a worthy member of the Society for Propagating the Gospel in Foreign Parts. To which is added a Postscript. 1708." [Anon.] The author urges the immediate appointment of Colonial Bishops, the French (he says) having one already at Quebec; he suggests that the Bishop of London might be Archbishop, with jurisdiction over them, and the Archbishop of Canterbury be entitled a Patriarch.

* "The Life of Mr. Henry Dodwell, with an Account of his Works, by Francis Brokesby, B.D. To which is added a letter to Robert Nelson, Esq., from Dr. Edmund Halley, containing an abstract of Mr. Dodwell's book De Cyclis. 1715."

Ken, in reply, not inſiſting upon his rights, the Shottiſbrooke Nonjurors returned to their pariſh church, the bells ringing merrily in honour of the event. The following account of this ſtep, and of his reaſons for it, is given by Dodwell himſelf in two letters to a friend:*

"Shottiſbrook, Jan. 11, $170\frac{0}{1}\frac{0}{8}$.

"WORTHY SIR,—I have received your's, and have already written to my lord of Bath and Wells, as the only ſurvivor of the invalidly deprived biſhops, and as thereby having it in his power to free not only his private dioceſe, but the whole National Church from the ſchiſm introduced by filling the ſees, which were no otherwiſe empty than by the invalid deprivations. This I take to be ſufficient upon our principles, who cannot juſtify our ſeparate communion on any other account than that of the ſchiſm, provided there be no other (whom we do not yet know of) who does claim, and can prove a better title to ſome one epiſcopal altar of our national Church, by ſucceſſion to ſome of our deceaſed fathers than the preſent incumbents. It concerns us all to join our prayers, that our own concord may be broken as little as is poſſible by our reconciliation into one communion with our adverſaries."

And on March 10, after the receipt of Ken's reply, he writes:

"Our two families here were at church on February the 26th, the firſt Sunday in Lent. But there are ſeveral who ſtill ſcruple the prayers. Endeavours are, however, uſing that this difference of practice may make as little difference in our flock as may be; whoſe endeavours will deſerve the prayers of all who deſire the good as well as the peace of this afflicted Church. And I hope your father and you will not be wanting in your's.

"Your affectionate brother,

"H. D."

* "A Defence of our Conſtitution in Church and State, or an anſwer to the late charge of the Nonjurors accuſing us of Hereſy and Schiſm, Perjury and Treaſon, by Nathaniel Marſhall, D.D. 1717." Appendix. No. 3.

Dodwell's conſcientious and kindly endeavour to effect the conciliation of the churches was not unattended by ſomething of perſonal annoyance to himſelf. Berkſhire was then within the dioceſe of Sarum, and his nonjuring acquaintance failed not to taunt him with the ſubmiſſion he would have to make to the obnoxious occupant of the ſee. Dodwell, however, did not ſhrink, in due courſe, from making Biſhop Burnet the tender of his obedience,* begging to be owned as an unworthy member of his flock, and "that you will be pleaſed at your convenience to admit my elder children to confirmation. I value this ordinance more than the looſe latitudinarian opinions of the age would oblige me to do, as taking it for the true baptiſm of the Spirit, derived from the Apoſtles. This will make me value the more the favour hereby conferred on my children, if they may receive this office from you, which may entitle them to ſo great benefits as are the conſequents of the inhabitation of the Spirit. In the meantime, I beg another boon of your prayers and the epiſcopal benediction upon me and mine. I am your fatherhood's unworthy communicant, Henry Dodwell." This was dated from Shottiſbrooke, Feb. 10, $17\frac{10}{11}$. The unhappy reflection on the latitudinarian party, which in truth was ſufficiently out of place in a letter of ſubmiſſion to one of its leaders, drew

* Four letters which paſſed between the Lord Biſhop of Sarum and Mr. Henry Dodwell. 1713.

ADVERTISEMENT.—The two firſt of the following letters having got into print, unknown to the Lord Biſhop of Sarum, or to Mrs. Dodwell, the worthy widow of the very learned and pious Mr. Henry Dodwell, they were reprinted with the 3rd, which was ſent to the Bookſeller from that Ri^{t} Rev^{d} and learned prelate. There being ſeveral typographical faults, and words left out, which influence the ſenſe of thoſe letters, it was Mrs. Dodwell's deſire that they ſhould appear in public with that correctneſs, which belongeth to them in the originals. To which purpoſe ſhe was willing to communicate them to me by the hand of my worthy and learned friend Mr. Cherry of Shotteſbrooke, with a 4th letter, which the Lord Biſhop of Sarum wrote afterwards to Mr. Dodwell, and which concluded the correſpondence between them.

9th April, 1713. ROB. NELSON.

back next day from Burnet an angry and bitter reply, arraigning Dodwell's motives for his change, and not ſparing his perſonal character. He reproaches him for his book againſt the natural immortality of the ſoul, as having afforded a handle to unbelief, of which Collins the deiſt had not failed to lay hold; he ſtyles him "one of the moſt ſelf conceited men of the age," ſays he ſhall not be in Berkſhire to hold a confirmation till midſummer twelvemonth, and gives him liberty to procure the ſervice of ſome other biſhop in the interval. Dodwell had but a year to live, and was weary of controverſy and quarrel. He replied in a mild and apologetical letter, and encloſed his book againſt incenſe, as ſufficient to clear him from the imputation of Romaniſing tendencies. "Nor will it perhaps be diſpleaſing to acquaint you, that the young gentleman who gave the occaſion for it is one who never had any advantage of any other education than what he had in the Iſle of Man, the rather becauſe it makes ſo highly for the commendation of your brother, the biſhop of that iſland, who has much improved them." This ſoft anſwer turned away Burnet's wrath, who wrote at laſt (April 24, 1711) from Clerkenwell a kindly reply, and in return for the tract upon incenſe begged to "ſend two of my explications of the Church Catechiſm to your children. I pray God bleſs you and them." The two firſt letters between Dodwell and the biſhop, got ſurreptitiouſly into print, through the contrivance, apparently, of ſome one who wiſhed to diſcourage the Nonjurors from conforming, by the reception that one of their leaders had met with. And Robert Nelſon therefore undertook, after his friend's deceaſe, the congenial taſk of publiſhing its more kindly concluſion.

Nelſon's own views upon this queſtion coincided altogether with Dodwell's, and he acted in concert with him on the occaſion; writing (like him) to Biſhop Ken, to know whether he laid claim any longer to his ſpiritual allegiance.

He gives this account of his proceedings in a letter* to a friend, dated Feb. 21, 1709-10.

"Sir,—In order to satisfy your enquiry I can acquaint you that I have received a letter from Bishop Ken, who assures me 'that he was always against that practice, which he foresaw would perpetuate the schism, and declared against it, and that he had acted accordingly, and would not have it laid at his door, having made a recess (as he says) for a much more worthy person. And he apprehends it was always the judgment of his brethren, that the death of the canonical bishops would render the invaders canonical, in regard the schism is not to last always.'

"Afterwards his lordship adds this, 'I presume Mr. Dodwell and others with him go to church, though I myself do not, being a public person; but to communicate with my successor in that part of the office which is unexceptionable I should make no difficulty.'

"This letter I communicated to Mr. Dodwell, when in town, which he thought clear enough for closing the schism, and I suppose in a short time he may have one for the same purpose. I can give you no account of the progress of the project, having not seen Mr. W—— since Sunday was sevennight, when he was with me, with Mr. Cherry and Mr. Dodwell, but I suppose he is prosecuting his proposals for peace.

"As to *ipso facto* excommunications, I think they are only *sententia lata ab ipso jure*, a sentence passed by the law, which as the canonists say requires *sententiam latam a judice*, another sentence passed by the judge. An *ipso facto* excommunication by any canons, not barring men from communion till there be a declaratory sentence, as Lyndwood notes. Lin. in Constit. Joh. Peccham. This matter is largely treated of by Monsieur du Pin, De Disciplinâ Ecclesiastica.

"Your faithful humble servant,

"Rob. Nelson.

"Feb. 21, 1709-10."

* Marshall's "Defence." Appendix. No. 5.

His friend Hickes was lying on a ſick bed, when news reached him of Nelſon's intended ſeceſſion. He had procured himſelf, in 1693, to be conſecrated Biſhop of Thetford, in virtue of which he claimed, at Biſhop Lloyd's death, to be regarded as the head of the nonjuring communion. The ſeceſſion of Dodwell and his followers was thus a formal repudiation of his pretenſions to the epiſcopacy, and he could not but be deeply mortified to find even his boſom friend abandoning his cauſe. He ſent at once to Nelſon, informing him that he was about to draw up a paper on the ſubject, and deſiring him to poſtpone his ſeceſſion till it ſhould be prepared. Nelſon agreed to defer the ſtep till Eaſter Day. Hickes's infirmities diſabled him from completing his taſk,* and Nelſon accordingly was received into the Eſtabliſhed Church at the ſpecified time, by his friend Sharp, Archbiſhop of York, in the church of St. Mildred's, Poultry. Nelſon had for ſome years enjoyed the acquaintance of the good Archbiſhop. In 1707, we find him encloſing to the Archbiſhop his friend Hickes's anſwer to the "Rights of the Chriſtian Church," and receiving his animadverſions upon its argument. They were ſo intimate, ſays Sharp's biographer, as to ſpend many hours together in private converſation; and could not but frequently diſcuſs the reaſons which divided them in church communion. And no ſooner was Biſhop Lloyd deceaſed, than Sharp renewed his application to Nelſon upon the ſubject. "I fell upon a diſcourſe," he writes in his diary, Friday, Jan. 27, $170\frac{9}{10}$, "with Mr. Nelſon, about his continuing in the ſchiſm now after the Biſhop of Norwich is dead. He tells me that he is not without doubt, but he will further conſider the matter, and when he comes to a reſolution, after an enquiry how

* The letter to Nelſon was afterwards publiſhed in "The Conſtitution of the Catholic Church, and the nature and conſequences of Schiſm ſet forth in a collection of Papers written by the late Revd. George Hickes, D.D. 1716."

matters ſtand, he will perſiſt in it." Nelſon was conſtantly with the Archbiſhop about this time, being mentioned in his diary as a viſitant, Jan. 30, Feb. 5, 17, and 25, March 5 and 18. On February 15th, Sharp received "the good news," as he called it, "of Mr. Nelſon's intention to return to our communion;" and on April 9th, being Eaſter Day, "I preached," he writes, "at St. Mildred's, Poultry, and adminiſtered the ſacrament, where was preſent Mr. Nelſon, which was the firſt time he had communicated in the ſacrament ſince the Revolution. I gave the ſacrament likewiſe to Mr. D'Oyley, whom I had reconciled to the Church, he having been educated as a Papiſt."*.

The motive, it will be remembered, which originally determined Nelſon to quit the communion of the Eſtabliſhed Church, was his inability conſcientiouſly to join in the prayers for William and Mary, which, by his very preſence in church during their uſe, the worſhipper was ſuppoſed to ſanction. At this period, however, of his life, Nelſon ſeems to have arrived at a different concluſion; and it was the alteration of his views on this point which now enabled him to conform to the Eſtabliſhed Church, without affecting any concurrence in theſe "immoral prayers," as they were termed by the Nonjurors. His reaſonings and concluſions on the matter are thus explained in an anſwer which he ſent to the following Query on Church Communion,† and in which he lays down principles capable of a much wider application:—

"*Query*. Whether a man may hold communion with ſuch a Church, and join in all points of public worſhip with ſuch a Church, as uſe of unlawful prayers, without guilt or diſſimulation?

* "Life of John Sharp, D.D., Lord Archbiſhop of York," vol. ii. pp. 28, 31.

† Marſhall's "Defence." Appendix No. 9. A True Copy of the late Mr. Nelſon's anſwer to the following Query concerning Church Communion.

"*Anſwer.* If by joining in all parts of public worſhip be meant the actual joining in thoſe prayers that are unlawful, no perſon can lawfully do it. For he can no more ſay Amen to what he deſires not or deteſts, than he can ſay Amen to that which is no Article of his Faith, and which he looks upon as falſe.

"But if by joining in public prayers be meant only holding communion with ſuch a Church, I think he lawfully may.

"1. I ſhall conſider it in reſpect to conſcience, and then the ſenſe of it may be reduced to this principle by thoſe that hold the negative: that when there is any thing unlawful to be prayed for in the offices of the Church, we are then bound to ſeparate from that Church.

"This is a propoſition by no means to be allowed, and ſome time ago was ſo far from being owned by the Church of England, that it was cenſured as groſſly fanatical. But becauſe it now appears under another dreſs, I ſhall,

"Firſtly, ſtate the point.

"Secondly, ſhow my reaſons for diſſenting from it.

"In ſtating the point, ſome things are to be premiſed.

"1. That the Church ſpoken of is ſuch a Church as may lawfully be communicated with in all things but this.

"2. That it would be a duty to communicate with that Church, were not this obſtruction in the way.

"3. That this obſtruction does not concern the vitals of religion.

"4. That this is made no condition or term of communion, nor what is required of any one towards communion, but to the miniſter, who ſubſcribes, uſes the offices, and is preſumed to ſay Amen.

"Theſe things being premiſed, I apprehend the aforeſaid propoſition will not hold true; for we may hold communion with a Church where ſomewhat is aſſerted that is falſe, or prayed for that is unlawful. And it may not be improper to recollect the common reaſons of the old Nonconformiſts againſt the Browniſts as to this particular.

"1. That notwithſtanding ſuch miſtakes in a Church, Chriſt holds communion with it; and where Chriſt holds communion, we are obliged to hold it; for it is there as with the ſoul in the body, which leaves not the body for the headache, or a wound that is not mortal.

"2. Then if that were true we should hold no communion with any church in the world, because it is more than probable that no church in its offices is so perfect, as to be without error or mistake in them.

"If it be said, why do we then forsake the communion of the Church of Rome? I answer:—

"1. That that Church is not to be held communion with, though its offices were pure, because of the doctrines and practices of it, which are corrupted in the vitals of them.

"2. That the very offices do partake of the corruption, are vitally corrupted, as in respect of the object of worship—saints and images, or of the things prayed for, or the things acknowledged therein.

"3. They are so incorporated that there is no communicating without them, the body of their service being madeup of th em.

"4. These are among them made necessary terms of communion; so should any of a contrary opinion hold communion with that Church in fact, as he is *ipso facto* an heretic, and stands excommunicated by their Maundy Thursday Bull, so if discovered he would be prosecuted as such.

"5. I make this as a proposal, Whether if a person should go to a confession, and much more to an assembly of theirs and offer to come to mass and receive, provided he may be permitted not to believe Purgatory, &c., he would be allowed and encouraged? And much less would he prevail to have the case so stated and publicly declared.

"But now this is not only so with us, as to particular casuists, but it is declared upon all occasions, and publicly printed, that this is no term of communion; and that practice so far confirms it that those who do not own the government are admitted to the sacrament, as well as those that do.

"But granting this, yet is not this dissimulation? I answer, if he doth not dissemble, he is not supposed to dissemble.

"1. For it is the constant and avowed principle of the Church of England, that a person may be present at a worship so circumstantiated as before, and join in it when

everything is not approved or believed to be true and good.

"2. It is the declared opinion that this is no condition of communion, and ſo every one of the communion is not preſumed to approve it, or to hold it to be true and good, becauſe he is bound ſtrictly to approve no farther than it is made an article of communion.

"3. There are thoſe who are in communion of the Church of England, who are of another opinion, and are known to be ſo, and yet allowed to communicate.

"And conſequently they that join in the offices of the Church, are not neceſſarily ſuppoſed to join in thoſe particulars. And there is no diſſimulation in joining as far as they can, which, it uſed to be ſaid, all were bound to do.

"As to what is objected in relation to the guilt that is contracted by voluntary hearing a bad thing, the obligation of being preſent ſufficiently diſcharges one from any guilt of that kind."

It will be apparent from the above argument that Nelſon ſtill adhered to the Jacobite cauſe, and was unable to join in the public prayers for Queen Anne. He openly profeſſed his intention never to go to church on ſtate prayer days, appointed by royal authority, for "that the intention of thoſe days is a ſolemn acknowledgment of the pretended right to which he could not aſſent." He was in the habit, like other Nonjurors of the time, of expreſſing his diſſent when the royal titles were given her, in the ſervices of the church. His practice here agreed with thoſe of his friends Cherry and Dodwell; the former of whom uſed to riſe from his knees at the name of the Queen, and ſtand up facing the congregation, while the latter contented his conſcience with a leſs conſpicuous proteſt, and uſed to ſlide off his knees and ſit down upon his haſſock. Other Jacobite worſhippers, as Samuel Parker, ſatisfied themſelves and amuſed their neighbours in church by turning over the leaves of their prayer-books with unneceſſary vehemence,

ſo as to avoid hearing, if poſſible, the unpalatable words.*

Nelſon's conduct in quitting the nonjuring communion received its ſhare of public criticiſm, and carried weight with his party. Two years before he had attracted notice by the prominent poſition he held among the London Jacobites, and when, under the apprehenſion of a French invaſion in favour of the Pretender, orders were given to the juſtices † of peace for Middleſex, to proſecute all Papiſts and Nonjurors who did not immediately take the abjuration oath, he found it convenient to prolong his abſence from town. The imputation that he had quitted town under apprehenſion, he ſomewhat teſtily repudiates in two letters to his old friend Dr. Mapletoft, the tone of which jars with his ordinary gentleneſs of expreſſion. ‡

"Reverend Sir,—I was yeſterday told that you were pleaſed to ſay in a public coffee-houſe, that I was ſlipt out of the way becauſe I would not take the oaths. I muſt confeſs I doubt the truth of it, and I am ſo well ſatisfied of your friendſhip, that 'tis not poſſible for me to imagine you

* Kennett MSS. vol. xvi. p. 348. Life, p. 161.

The importance which was attached to Nelſon's converſion is ſhown by the ſoreneſs with which it is alluded to by the Publiſher of Hickes' "Conſtitution of theCatholic Church." "I have given this account of the writing this letter to Mr. Nelſon, becauſe ſome people are apt to make uſe of his practice as an argument for directing other men's conſciences. But they ſhould conſider that Mr. Nelſon's practice was founded on Mr. Dodwell's reasons; and if they are not good, he was certainly in the wrong. Beſides to ſay that Nelſon did ſuch a thing and therefore I may do it too, is the moſt abſurd way of reasoning in the world; for Mr. Nelſon was but a man and conſequently fallible. And though he was a pious and learned man, yet I believe there is no one who imagines but that our Author was at leaſt his equal in both thoſe reſpects." pp. viii., ix. So Hearne endeavours to extenuate the loſs which the Nonjurors received in his ſeceſſion. "Mr. Nelſon was not much wondered at by Dr. Hickes and his friends for acting thus, ſince Mr. Nelſon had all along ſpoke generally more honorably of the complyers than of the ſufferers, and had written the life of Biſhop Bull, that was one of thoſe that always did comply." "Reliquiæ,"—p. 799.

† Luttrell's "Hiſtorical Relation," vol. vi. p. 296.

‡ "European Magazine," vol. xv. pp. 353, 4.

deſigned me any hurt, if you ſhould have chanced to have ſaid anything to that purpoſe. In times of public ferment the leſs one is mentioned the better. It was really a very bad cold that carried me into the country the latter end of February, though other reaſons prevailed upon me to make a longer ſtay than I deſigned.

"I am, dear Sir,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"ROBERT NELSON.

"May 17, 1708.

"To the Rev. Dr. Mapletoft,
at Greenwich."

"22 May, 1708.

"REVEREND SIR,—There was no occaſion to have given yourſelf the trouble of writing ſo long a letter. I am very well ſatisfied you are my friend, and conſequently that you are not capable of deſigning me the leaſt miſchief, but ready upon all opportunities to give me the teſtimony of your true affection. It is very probable the report I mentioned was founded upon the converſation you hint at, for when a ſtory is repeated it generally either gets or loſes circumſtances. I muſt give men leave to think as they pleaſe; and provided I can keep a conſcience void of offence, I am leſs ſolicitous of their cenſures, for I muſt ſtand or fall at another tribunal, for which God prepare us.

"I am, with great eſteem and value, dear Sir,

"Your moſt faithful friend and ſervant,

"R. NELSON.

"My humble ſervice to Dr. Gaſtril and Mrs. Gaſtril.

"To the Rev. Dr. Mapletoft,
at Greenwich."

When the hopes of the Jacobite party were riſing higher

at the cloſe of Queen Anne's reign, Nelſon's eagerneſs * to promote the intereſts of the exiled family received additional ſtimulus, and he joined Hilkiah Bedford in reviſing and preparing for the preſs the notorious Jacobite book on Hereditary Right.† The work was intended as a reply to Dr. Higden's "View of the Engliſh Conſtitution," in which he had vindicated the taking of the oaths to Queen Anne, upon the principle of a ſucceſsful uſurpation. It formed a folio volume of 337 pages, in which the author argued from the acknowledged facts of Engliſh hiſtory, and from ſome MSS. records in the poſſeſſion of Lord Treaſurer Harley, that the ſovereign of England had never urged the plea of poſſeſſion, but always ſome hereditary or teſtamentary right; and he had the aſſurance to excuſe rather than juſtify Anne's acceptance of the crown, as in truſt for her abſent brother. "Caſes," he ſays, "may be ſuppoſed of princes, who, for want of power and opportunity of doing right to the lawful heir, are forced to endure the burden of a crown, which they would readily and gladly eaſe themſelves of, upon a proper occaſion; as when the rightful heir is abroad, in a diſtant kingdom, and perhaps at the diſpoſal of a foreign prince." The author was Rev. George Harbin,‡ Chaplain to the Lord Weymouth, at Longleate. The Introduction was written by another nonjuring clergyman, the Rev. Theophilus Downes, formerly fellow of Balliol College. The book was carried through the preſs by the Rev. Hilkiah Bedford, the deprived Vicar of Olney, Bucks, who was then keeping a boarding houſe for the

* Another illuſtration of Nelſon's Jacobite zeal may be gained from the interpoſition, which he vainly attempted with Teniſon, in behalf of the unfortunate Sir John Fenwick. See Calamy's own Life, 2nd edit. i. 383, 4. And "Memoirs of Tenison," p. 32.

† "The Hereditary Right of the crown of England aſſerted; the History of the Succeſſion ſince the Conqueſt cleared, and the true Engliſh Conſtitution vindicated from the miſrepreſentations of Dr. Higden's View and Defence." By a Gentleman. 1713.

‡ Nichol's "Literary Anecdotes," i. 167,168.

Weſtminſter ſcholars. Leſlie and Nelſon were reputed at the time to be the perſons chiefly concerned in its production, and the following letter* from the latter to Bedford will exhibit the extent to which he was reſponſible for the volume.

"Reverend Sir,—I have this day received the encloſed letter,† which brought me the melancholy account of the loſs of worthy Mr. Cherry, who has quickly followed his dearly beloved friend Mr. Dodwell. I am not certain whether this excellent perſon was known to you; but he was intimately acquainted with y^e^ Dean, to whom you may communicate this bad news, when you find him beſt able to bear it. In my laſt letter to him, I told him that he was ſo ill that his recovery was deſpaired of, yet I thought it would be too great a ſurprize if I ſhould immediately follow that ſtroak with the relation of his death. God grant that theſe mementos of mortality may quicken our preparation for eternity. According to y^r^ deſire, I am reading over once

* Now firſt printed from the Rawlinſon MSS. in the Bodleian L. 42.

† The encloſed letter from Brokeſby to Nelſon may be allowed a place in a memoir of the latter:—

"Shotteſbrooke, Sept. 24, 1713.

"Honoured Sir,—I am ſorry I ſhould become the meſſenger of unwelcome news to you. It pleaſed God about 4 of the clock in the morning after which you left us, that our worthy friend Mr. Cherry was ſeized with a coma or lethargic diſtemper, which deprived him immediately of the uſe of his ſenſes and underſtanding, which (notwithſtanding the uſe of all methods preſcribed by Dr. Brewer and Dr. Crompton, ſuch as of bleeding, bliſters, clyſters, &c.) he never recovered, but died this morning about 8 or 9 of the clock, and now reſts from his labors he conflicted with. Mrs. Cherry (who gives her humble ſervice to you) purpoſes to obſerve his deſires in making a private funeral for him, to be carried to church by ſome of his own tenants, and not to invite any to his funeral; otherwiſe ſhe would upon many reaſons have invited yourſelf. At preſent, intention is to bury him on Friday night.

"Sir,

"Your much obliged and humble ſervant,

"Fra. Brokesby.

"Mrs. Cherry requeſts your prayers for Mr. Cherry's diſconſolate widow and fatherleſs children.

"To the honoured Robt. Nelſon, Eſquire,
at Horton, n^r^ Windſor."

more that admirable Treatiſe Mr. Smith has printed, and may truly ſay of it, *decies repetita placebit*. I cannot think that Dr. Higden will ever pretend to anſwer the author, who is much his ſuperior in reaſon and ſtyle, as well as in law and hiſtory. I am very much miſtaken if that book is not read with univerſal applauſe. I do not remember any paſſages which are obnoxious to the cenſure of y^e^ Government, but if I find any which may have a tendency that way, I will not fail to remark them. As to the title, we may diſcourſe farther upon that point when we meet, w^h^ I hope will be next week, ſince I purpoſe to be in town on Weneſday (ſic) y^e^ 30th. I recommend myſelf to your prayers, and am, with great reſpect, Reverend Sir,

"Y^r^ moſt faithful humble Servant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"24th Sept. 1713."

The combined caution of the two friends failed to ſecure the work from a political proſecution. The book indeed was introduced to public notice with every circumſtance of advantage that was poſſible. "The publication of it," ſays Kennet,* "I remember was with ſome ſort of pomp; the title pages, in full half-ſheets of good paper, appearing on a Sunday morning upon every conſpicuous poſt and door, to draw away the eyes of all that were going to church, or to any religious worſhip, with an advertiſement happening to be put into the next *Gazette*." (Oct. 17.) This was ſuppoſed to have been done by the contrivance of Bromley,† formerly the leader of the High-Church oppoſition in the Commons, and now one of the Secretaries of State. Nelſon, who was much at Windſor at this time, ventured to appear at Court, and to preſent (it is ſaid) to her Majeſty, a richly bound copy of the work, which lay in the royal cloſet for

* "Wiſdom of looking Backwards," p. 313.

† Calamy (Life ii. 268) ſays that many copies were preſented to thoſe in power; Boyer adds to officers in the army (Annals of Q. Anne, p. 657,8).

ſome days after.* (Nov. 13, 1713.) Popular opinion, however, ran ſo high againſt the book, that the miniſtry found themſelves compelled, at the inſtance of the Hanoverian Miniſter, to proſecute the reputed author, who was ſentenced by the Court of Queen's Bench (Feb. 15, $17\frac{13}{14}$)† to be impriſoned for 3 years, to pay a fine of 1000 marks to the Queen, and to go round Weſtminſter Hall the Friday following, in view of the ſeveral courts, with a paper on his breaſt denoting his crime. He poſſeſſed, however, ſufficient intereſt to procure a remiſſion of the more ignominious part of his ſentence; and when the Friday came, and a concourſe of people were aſſembled to witneſs the humiliation of the Jacobite advocate, Bedford produced a pardon to that extent, obtained, it was thought, by the interceſſion of Nelſon.‡

Nelſon lived long enough to ſhare with his brother Nonjuror, the mortification of ſeeing their doctrine of Hereditary Right effectually repudiated by the acceſſion of George I.; and his charitable zeal prevailed ſo far over his political bias, as to induce him to take a leading part in an exhibition of the Charity Schools on the new King's entry into the Metropolis. To the perſonal influence, however, of his different nonjuring friends, muſt be aſcribed, in a great meaſure, that charitable zeal which eventually had the effect of weakening his adheſion to their body. In their communion, he continued, as we have ſeen, for nearly 20 years of his life. From among them he choſe his deareſt friends; and, under their guidance, he matured his theological opinions, and composed his devotional works. Excluded as the Nonjurors were from the paſtoral care, pinched with

* "Wiſdom of looking Backwards," p. 317. That *Nelſon* was the perſon who preſented the book is denied by Hearne, "Reliquiæ," i. 387.

† See State Trials, ix. 682.

‡ Lanſdown MSS., 1024. Brit. Mus., being Kennett's MSS. Collections, vol. xvi. p. 444.

poverty, compelled to devote their leiſure to literary engagements, living, moreover, in a conſtant fever of political excitement and depreſſion, they were precluded from taking any active ſhare in the educational and charitable endeavours of the time. But to them belongs the credit of having trained amid their ranks as influential a religious writer, and as munificent an example of charity, as that or any age of our Church has produced.

CHAPTER III.

NELSON'S WAYS AND METHODS OF DOING GOOD.

The Religious Societies vindicated by Nelſon.—Societies for the Reformation of Manners approved by him.—Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge; its origin and early operations.—Nelſon elected a Member.—His correſpondence with Wanley, the Secretary.—Extracts from the Society's Minutes.—Letters in behalf of Archbiſhop of Gochtan.—The Charity Schools; their eſtabliſhment and religious character.—Nelſon's ſhare in promoting them.—Further extracts from the Minutes of the S. P. C. K. —Letters to Mr. Dixon of Bath.—Extracts reſumed.—Nelſon's letters to Lord Oxford in reference to the Charity Schools.—Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel in Foreign Parts; its origin and labours.—Nelſon's ſhare in them.—Minutes of the S. P. G.—Nelſon's thoughts on Miſſions. —The designs of Dr. Bray.—Nelſon advocates his plan for Parochial Libraries—The Commiſſion for building new Churches.—Nelſon a Commiſſioner.—St. George's Chapel, Ormond-ſtreet.—Nelſon's ſuggeſtions for building churches.—Charitable Deſideranda enumerated by him.—Theological Seminaries needed.—Charity Schools for Blackguard Boys.—Nelſon's "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate."

ROBERT NELSON'S return to the Eſtabliſhed Communion was doubtleſs in great part owing to the intimacies that he had contracted with the moſt excellent of her members, in the proſecution of different charitable and religious undertakings. He appears to have emerged about the year 1699 from the retirement in which he had previouſly lived among the Nonjurors, and to have found himſelf promptly and cordially welcomed, deſpite of political differences and eccleſiaſtical ſeparation, into the ranks of thoſe pious and zealous churchmen who were now banding themſelves together in the cauſe of morality and religion. From that date till ſhortly before his death, in 1714, we find him almoſt daily occupied with the buſineſs of the church aſſociations of the day; the patron and advocate of the

Religious Societies, and of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners; a leading member, and a frequent chairman of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge; a conſtant attendant at the meetings of the ſiſter Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel in Foreign Parts; a liberal ſupporter of the Rev. Dr. Bray's Deſign for the eſtabliſhment of parochial libraries; a member of the Royal Commiſſion for building fifty new churches in London and Weſtminſter; one of the chief promoters of the erection of charity ſchools; taking a lively intereſt in the Corporation of the Sons of the Clergy, in the eſtabliſhment of Queen Anne's Bounty, and in the attempts then made towards the proviſion of parochial workhouſes for the poor. To an active part in all theſe pious undertakings he added a keen and thoughtful appreciation of thoſe religious wants which ſtill remained unprovided; and in his liſt of charitable works then lacking in our country he included theological ſeminaries for the clergy; training colleges for the maſters and miſtreſſes of the newly-founded charity ſchools; ſchools for the "Blackguard boys" of our ſtreets, equivalent to the Ragged Schools of a ſubſequent period; ſpecial hoſpitals for particular diſeaſes; penitentiaries for fallen women; a foundling hoſpital for their children; places of religious retirement for the devout; houſes of probation for converts from popery or diſſent; the appointment of ſuffragan biſhops for the American plantations; and a corporation for the converſion of the Romaniſts of Ireland.

1. *The Religious Societies.*

In our enumeration of theſe "ways and methods of doing good," as Nelſon entitles them, the firſt place is due to the Religious Societies of young men, which were founded in London about the year 1678. The narrative

of their eſtabliſhment* recalls the circumſtances under which the ſimilar ſocieties of St. Vincent de Paul were founded at Paris ſixty years before. A few young men belonging to the middle ſtation of life, impreſſed by the ſermons of Dr. Horneck, the well-known preacher at the Savoy, and of Mr. Smithies, lecturer at St. Michael's Cornhill, touched ſo with a ſenſe of their ſins, and earneſtly deſiring to live nearer to God, began to feel their need of cloſer and ſpiritual intercourſe and of mutual encouragement in the practices of piety. And they formed themſelves, therefore, by the advice of ſome clergymen, into a religious ſociety, the members of which agreed to meet together one evening in the week for religious conference; on which occaſions they ſang pſalms and prayed, read portions of Holy Scripture, and diſcourſed upon ſome point of practical religion. They were all zealouſly attached to the Church of England, and when in King James the Second's reign they ſaw the maſs celebrated daily in the Chapel Royal and elſewhere, they reſolved, in a ſpirit of laudable emulation, to ſet up daily prayers at eight in the evening at St. Clement Danes, where they "never wanted," we are told, "a full and affectionate congregation." Their earneſt anxiety to guard themſelves from declenſion in religion ſecured their frequent reception of the Holy Communion, and their carefulneſs to receive it with unimpaired reverence induced them to ſet up preparation lectures on the Sunday or Friday preceding its adminiſtration at many churches in town. And not content with receiving the Sacrament upon the holydays of the Church, they were in the habit of meeting at one another's houſes on the vigils, or evenings preceding, in order to diſcourſe piouſly upon the ſubject matter of the day. To this anxiety to promote

* See the "Account of the Riſe and Progreſs of the Religious Societies of the City of London, &c., and of their endeavours for Reformation of Manners," by Joſiah Woodward, D.D. The 7th edition. 1800.

their own perſonal religion, they were not forgetful to add practical works of charity. Each member brought to the weekly conference a contribution proportioned to his means, toward the common fund, out of which ſums were granted for the relief of the poor, whom they ſought out at their homes, for the maintenance of charity ſchools, in the eſtabliſhment and management of which the members ſpecially intereſted themſelves; for the ſupport of daily prayers and lectures; and for the promotion of Dr. Bray's deſigns in the American plantations.

Theſe ſocieties did not purſue their path of piety and uſefulneſs without having to contend againſt ſomething of prejudice and ſuſpicion. It was objected by men of duller ſenſibility in religion, who did not themſelves feel the need of ſuch ſpiritual intercourſe, that their promoters were but ſetting up a church within a church, and refining upon the Chriſtian communion which was to be enjoyed at the Holy Table of every pariſh; while, with greater juſtice, the facility was pointed out with which ſuch aſſociations might be perverted to party purpoſes, and lead to the formation of ſects within the Church, or of ſchiſms from her pale. The unaffected piety, however, and the zealous labours of their members, prevailed over ſuch contingent diſadvantages, and obtained them the favour of Tillotſon, Compton, and many other of the prelates; while the opportunity of ſympathetic intercourſe that they afforded to young men like-minded in religion, ſatisfied a genuine craving of human nature, and enſured their rapid increaſe and extenſion; ſo that at laſt as many as forty-two different aſſociations held their meetings in London, and ſimilar ſocieties were eſtabliſhed at Oxford, Cambridge, Dublin, Drogheda, and many other large towns, and even in ſome rural pariſhes.

Robert Nelſon was keenly alive to their uſefulneſs and

value, and gives them * a foremoſt place amid the different methods, which he enumerates, for promoting the life and ſpirit of Chriſtianity at home; and in the preface to his "Feſtivals and Faſts" he thinks proper formally to undertake the defence of their conſtitution.

"I think it a great piece of juſtice," he writes, "to acknowledge and commend the pious and devout practices of the Religious Societies, who in this point as well as in many others, diſtinguiſh themſelves by their regular conformity and obedience to the laws of the Church; for they conſtantly attend the public aſſemblies upon ſuch holy ſeaſons. And till they can communicate regularly in their own pariſh churches upon ſuch days, they embrace thoſe opportunies that are provided, there being two churches in London employed for that purpoſe;† where they as duly receive the bleſſed Sacrament upon all feſtivals, as they perform all the other acts of public worſhip. How they ſpend the vigils, in preparing their minds for a due celebration of the enſuing ſolemnity, is more private, but not leſs commendable. And the great care they take to ſuppreſs the dawnings of enthuſiaſm, and to diſcountenance the firſt appearances of any vicious practices amongſt their members; and the methods they impoſe before delinquents are entirely reconciled, or totally rejected, is ſuch a preparation of the minds of the laity for the reception of that diſcipline which is wanted in the Church, that if ever we are bleſſed with what good men wiſh for, and bad men fear, theſe religious ſocieties will be very inſtrumental in introducing it, by that happy regulation which prevails amongſt them. And while they pay that deference they profeſs to their parochial miniſters, and are ready to be governed by their Rules and Orders to the judgment of the reverend clergy, I cannot apprehend but that they muſt be very ſerviceable to the intereſt of religion, and may contribute very much to revive that

* "Address to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate," by Robert Nelſon, Esqr., 1715. p. 136, 7.

† St. Mary le Bow and St. Dunſtan in the Weſt.

true ſpirit of Chriſtianity, which was ſo much the glory of the primitive times."

That this ſpecial apology was made neceſſary by ſome particular attacks then made upon the ſocieties, is rendered probable by the notice that was taken of it, a few weeks after,* at the meeting of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge; when

"Mr. Brewſter acquainted the Society that Mr. Nelſon had lately publiſhed a book, entitled, 'A Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England,' and that in the preface he had made very honourable mention of the Religious Societies, and vindicated them from the objections made againſt them. And the book being produced, the paragraphs relating thereunto were read. Reſolved, that the hearty thanks of the Society be given to Mr. Nelſon, for the compoſing and printing his ſaid excellent treatiſe, and particularly for what was now read; and that Sir John Phillips and Mr. Brewſter be deſired to acquaint him with the ſame."

On the 13th January following, it was agreed "that the treaſurer do deliver a copy to the ſteward of each of the Religious Societies, at their quarterly meeting." And a ſubſequent minute† illuſtrates the advantage which they derived from the advocacy of Nelſon:—

"A letter was read from Mr. Ellis of Sheffield to Mr. Skeate, certifying that lately at York, he found two Religious Societies of young men; that he aſſiſted at one of them, which met under the direction of Mr. Bradley; which ſociety at firſt were afraid that the Archbiſhop would not approve of their meetings; but that ſince then, Mr. Bradley had aſſured them that his Grace is perfectly reconciled, and in a particular manner returned his thanks to Mr. Nelſon for his account of them, in his preface to the 'Feaſts and Faſts of the Church.'"‡

* 23rd Dec., 1703. † July 14, 1706.

‡ The ſequel of theſe ſocieties is melancholy and diſappointing. They

2. *Societies for the Reformation of Manners.*

Many of the members of the Religious Societies were alſo engaged in the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, which have ſometimes been confounded with the former, but which differed from them both in their object and in their organiſation.* The chief deſign of the Religious Societies was, as we have ſeen, the promotion of perſonal piety among their members, who were all communicants of the Church of England; while the object of the other was the enforcement of the laws againſt vice, an undertaking in which diſſenters from the Church were freely allowed to co-operate. Theſe latter ſocieties had their origin, about 1691, in the efforts of five or ſix private gentlemen at London, who ſet themſelves to recover public morality from the exceſſes which had diſgraced it under Charles II., and which ſtill maintained an unbluſhing face, in ſpite of the more decorous example of William and Mary's court. One of theſe Reformation Societies was a central body, compoſed of eminent lawyers, members of parliament, magiſtrates, and other gentlemen, who met together for conſultation how beſt to put in force the

largely ſhared in the High-Church enthuſiaſm of Q. Anne's reign, imbibed a tincture of Jacobite tendencies, became obnoxious to the new Government, and drew down ſome obloquy on the Charity Schools which they had ſupported. They periſhed in the decay of religion under the Georges, one of their laſt annual meetings at Bow Church being in 1738, when they liſtened to a ſermon of Dr. Berriman, warning the members againſt being led aſtray by the irregularities of Whitfield. After that time, the warm piety which had animated theſe religious ſocieties and given ſuch vigor to the Church's work, was drained off into another channel.

* See an "Account of the Societies for the Reformation of Manners in England and Ireland, with a perſuaſive to Perſons of all ranks to be zealous and diligent in promoting the Execution of the Laws againſt Prophaneneſs and Debauchery, for the effecting a National Reformation." The 5th edition. 1701.

Alſo an "Account of the Progreſs of the Reformation of Manners in England, Scotland, and Ireland, and other parts of Europe and America, with reaſons and directions for our engaging in this glorious work." The 14th edition, with additions. 1706.

laws againſt ſwearing, drunkenneſs, and profanation of the Lord's Day, and who ſubſcribed towards the expenſes of proſecution. A ſecond ſociety conſiſted of about fifty tradeſmen and others, who made it their buſineſs to ſuppreſs the debauchery of the ſtreets. The members of another aſſociation undertook the obnoxious taſk of public informers, and brought the delinquents to puniſhment. Other bodies were variouſly conſtituted in the metropolis for ſimilar objects; and affiliated ſocieties were formed at Hull, Nottingham, Briſtol, and other provincial towns; blank warrants being ſent down from London to the local aſſociations for execution upon offenders, with an abſtract of the penal laws for the guidance of their members.

The deſign was encouraged by royal proclamations and parliamentary addreſſes. A new Act of Parliament was obtained againſt curſing and ſwearing. Grand juries, in their preſentments, took notice of theſe exertions. The dignitaries of the Eſtabliſhed Church warmly exerted themſelves in the cauſe. Teniſon recommended the ſocieties to his ſuffragans in a circular letter. Biſhop Fowler wrote a vindication of their proceedings. Stillingfleet brought them under the notice of Queen Mary. Biſhops Kidder, Williams, and Trelawney, Patrick and Burnet, Dr. Bray and Dr. Stanhope made honourable mention of them in their charges, or preached before them at their quarterly meetings at Bow Church. Under ſuch patronage the inferior members of theſe ſocieties proſecuted their undertaking with a zeal which ſometimes bordered upon intolerance. Seventy or eighty warrants were ſometimes executed in a week upon common ſwearers in the metropolis, "ſo that our conſtables ſometimes of late have found it difficult to take up a ſwearer in divers of our ſtreets." The Sunday markets, which had been kept open for ſome years previouſly, were effectually ſuppreſſed; drovers and carriers were ſtopped

in the road; bakers were not allowed to appear in the ſtreet with their baſkets, or "barbers with their pot, baſin, or periwig-box;" a ſtrict watch was kept on public-houſes, and "no tippling was allowed in them on the Lord's Day;" hundreds of diſſolute houſes were cloſed, and "ſome thouſands of lewd perſons were impriſoned, fined, and whipt, and the Tower end of the town much purged from that peſtilential generation of night-walkers; forty or fifty of them being ſent in a week to Bridewell, from whence, at their own deſire, they were tranſported to America, to gain an honeſt livelihood in the plantations." While to ſuch cogent meaſures the milder perſuaſions of argument were added, and no leſs than 100,000 ſhort tracts againſt drunkenneſs and other vices were gratuitouſly diſperſed throughout the country, eſpecial care being taken to preſent them to the culprits upon conviction.

Such unſparing attacks upon vice provoked (as might be expected) no inconſiderable oppoſition. The agents of the ſocieties often came into rough contact with the profligates of the town. A Mr. Cooper was murdered by ſome ſoldiers, as he was aſſiſting a conſtable in the execution of his office. And the tragical end of a Mr. Dent excited general indignation, the ſocieties attending his funeral at St. Clement's Church, Dr. Bray preaching a funeral ſermon, and ſix juſtices of the peace bearing the pall on the occaſion. Oppoſition of another kind was offered by De Foe, who (in this, as in ſo many other points, before his age) remonſtrated againſt the plan of ſuppreſſing vice by penalties, and ſatirically adviſed the higher claſſes to reform the manners of the people by example rather than by law. On the other hand, the High-Churchmen of the day took objection to the conſtitution of the ſocieties, as an undeſirable combination of churchmen and diſſenters; Archbiſhop Sharp refuſed to countenance their eſtabliſhment at

Nottingham, and Dr. Sacheverell preached againſt them in an aſſize ſermon at Derby.

Robert Nelſon's High-Church principles did not, however, prevent him from co-operating with diſſenters in the enforcement of public morality, nor did he exhibit any diſtruſt in the efficacy of ſuch compulſory meaſures for the ſuppreſſion of vice, or betray any of our modern diſinclination for their adoption. He was a warm ſupporter and advocate of the ſocieties for the reformation of manners, pleading that among their good effects "many offenders, by being thus legally proſecuted, have been brought to a ſenſe of their ſin and folly, and have been reclaimed; ſo that, by the bleſſing of God upon theſe endeavours, great good hath been done, not only to the removing of public ſcandal and ill examples, (in which this work hath had ſo very great ſucceſs), but, as we have reaſon to hope, in reſcuing ſouls from everlaſting deſtruction." He would make the ſupport of theſe endeavours a matter of obligation with all conſiſtent Chriſtians, and argues that "it looks ſomewhat like mocking of God, when we pray that He would reform the wicked, and do not our endeavours to aſſiſt therein. How can we pray that magiſtrates 'may miniſter juſtice to the puniſhment of wickedneſs and vice,' when we make not one ſtep towards having our prayers anſwered, either by giving information againſt offenders, or by contributing money, or otherwiſe, for the detecting of them?" And he concludes* with a recommendation of the "'Account of the Society for the Reformation of Manners in London and Weſtminſter,' writ with great ſerioufneſs and judgement by a worthy gentleman, who is eminent in doing good; and if, after that, any one hath any objection to be anſwered, let him read Mr. Diſney's 'Eſſay upon the execution of the Laws

* "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate," pp. 153 ſeqq. See alſo his "Life of Bull," p. 366.

againſt Immorality and Profaneneſs;' which it is impoſſible to read without being affected with it, if he have any ſenſe of religion, or any concern for the good of his country."*

3. *Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge.*

Toward the Religious Societies, and the Societies for the Reformation of Manners, Nelſon ſtood in the relation of an apologiſt and patron. Of the Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge he was one of the earlieſt and moſt influential members, and all but one of its original founders. This venerable Society was firſt eſtabliſhed at the end of 1698 by a few friends of Dr. Thomas Bray, in purſuance of the following agreement: "Whereas the growth of vice and immorality is greatly owing to groſs ignorance of the principles of the Chriſtian religion, we whoſe names are underwritten do agree to meet together as often as we can conveniently, to conſult, under the conduct of the Divine providence and aſſiſtance, how we may be able, by due and lawful methods, to promote Chriſtian knowledge." The earlieſt recorded meeting of the Society was on the 8th of March following, when Lord Guildford, Sir Humphrey Mackworth, Juſtice Hook, Dr. Bray, and Col. Colcheſter were the members preſent. To theſe were ſhortly added many of the moſt eminent churchmen of the day. Among the prelates, Biſhops Fowler and Williams, and Kidder, Lloyd of Worceſter, and Evans of Bangor became members of the Society; Burnet encouraged it by a donation of 10l. per annum; and Patrick, when waited on with a

* Theſe ſocieties continued their exertions for about 40 years. In 1757, when they had been for a few years quite extinct throughout the kingdom, an attempt was made to revive them by ſome members of Weſley's and Whitfield's congregations, in conjunction with ſome Diſſenters. John Weſley preached a ſermon before the new Society, Jan. 30 1763, at the chapel in West-street, Seven-dials.

printed account of its proceedings, "heartily thanked God for it," and promiſed to "give it all the countenance he could." Among the inferior clergy, Mr. Shute, the lecturer of St. Mary's, Whitechapel, Dr. Manningham, then rector of St. Andrew's, Holborn, Sir George Wheeler (Hickes's pupil), and Nelſon's old friend Dr. Mapletoft, were the firſt to join in the undertaking; while among the lay members were found the names of William Melmoth, Sir Richard Blackmore, and Robert Nelſon. Among the correſponding members, who diſſeminated the publications of the Society, and reported the progreſs of religion in their ſeveral localities, were John Strype the antiquary, vicar of Lowleyton, Gilbert White of Selbourne, George Mompeſſon of Mansfield Notts, Francis Bragge of Hitchin, author of "Diſcourſes on the Miracles;" Samuel Weſley of Epworth, who ſent an account of a religious ſociety in his pariſh; William Reeves, the tranſlator of the early Chriſtian Apologiſts, whoſe acquaintance Nelſon made at his vicarage of Cranford; Dr. Grabe, for the dominions of the King of Pruſſia; and Dr. Wilſon, Biſhop of Man.

Two of the main objects to which the Society addreſſed itſelf, were the eſtabliſhment of charity ſchools, and the promotion of Dr. Bray's miſſionary deſigns; objects which will claim a ſeparate notice in this enumeration of Robert Nelſon's "Ways and Methods of doing Good." The circulation of books of piety formed from the firſt another branch of their operations, and among the publications which Nelſon ſaw placed upon their liſt, mention may be made, in addition to his own writings, of Dr. Woodward's tracts againſt Drunkenneſs and Swearing, Oſtervald's "Abridgement of the Bible," "The Faith and Duty of a Chriſtian," Lewis's "Church Catechiſm explained," Bradford on Regeneration, Melmoth's "Great Importance of a Religious Life," Bull's "Corruptions of the Church of Rome," the "Life of James Bonnell," and Scougal's "Life of God

in the Soul of Man;" as works which after a period of 150 years ſtill maintain their place upon the catalogue of the Society. Another object which engaged much of their time, and to which their attention was directed by Biſhop Compton, was the moral and religious condition of the inmates of our gaols. Mr. Shute was directed to confer with the ordinaries of Newgate and Ludgate, and Col. Colcheſter with the City Marſhal on the ſubject. Dr. Bray and Mr. Stubbs, the admired reader of the Spectator,* were deputed to viſit the apartments of the priſoners, and a Committee of Priſons was appointed to report on the abuſes of priſons and their remedies; the pious Mr. Bœhm, chaplain to Prince George of Denmark, who was himſelf in the habit of viſiting the metropolitan priſoners once a week, offering his co-operation. Bibles and Prayer books were provided for the different wards, Kettlewell's "Office for Priſoners" was gratuitouſly diſperſed among the inmates, and a Mr. Rawlins appointed preacher at the Marſhalſea, which had previouſly been deſtitute of a chaplain. A packet of religious books was ſent to every county gaol. A form of prayer drawn up for criminals condemned to die was diſperſed by four of the judges, and endeavours were made to ſecure the unhappy criminals the privilege of a ſeparate cell, in which they might more religiouſly prepare themſelves for their end.

Other claſſes of the population received particular attention. Suitable books of devotion were diſperſed among the patients of the London hoſpitals. 30,000 copies of the "Soldier's Monitor" were ſent to the army in Holland. A plan for the reformation of Seamen was taken into conſideration, and Admiral Benbow and Sir George Rooke undertook to have ſimilar tracts diſperſed throughout the fleet. 800 "Kind Cautions againſt Swearing" were diſtributed

* No. 147.

in town among the hackney coachmen; "Kind Cautions to Watermen" were diſperſed among the Weſt country bargemen, and 26 copies were given by the Secretary "to one Chamberlayne, a waterman, a very honeſt and good man, who had promiſed to diſperſe them among all the watermen where he ſhould think that they would do moſt good." While at the ſame time the vices of the upper claſſes did not eſcape animadverſion, repreſentations were drawn up of the immoralities of the ſtage, and a proteſt lifted againſt the practice of duelling.*

To theſe exertions at home the Society added an active intereſt in miſſionary undertakings abroad. They early gave a liberal ſupport to the Daniſh miſſionaries in Malabar, and printed a Portugueſe Teſtament for their uſe; they procured a catechiſm to be drawn up by Biſhop Williams of Chicheſter for the Greek churches, and had them tranſlated into Romaic by ſome Greeks then ſtudying at Oxford. Bibles and prayer books were ſent to Newfoundland, and miſſionaries proceeding to Virginia and Pennſylvania were provided with theſe and other books of devotion. The French refugees going to America were ſupplied with tracts in French, and Dutch tracts were ſent for diſtribution in Holland. The refugees from Orange, then laid waſte by the French, were conſoled with copies of Kettlewell's "Office for the Perſecuted;" and attention being called by Dr. Woodward to the ſtate of the Engliſh captives in the Iſland of Ceylon, it was "ordered that fifty of the 'Conſolatory Letters to Slaves,' be delivered to Dr. Evans" for their uſe.

The aſſiduous and influential part which Robert Nelſon took in theſe proceedings will be beſt exhibited by a ſeries

* "Reſolved, that the thanks of this Society be given to Sir John Phillips, for the nobleſt Chriſtian example he has ſhown in refuſing a challenge after the higheſt provocation imaginable, and that the Lord Guildford be pleaſed to acquaint him therewith." Minute of Dec. 21, 1699.

of extracts from the minutes of the Society, and from his own letters to Wanley, the Secretary.

Thus we find, on June 8th, 1699, that Mr. Nelſon was propoſed the firſt time; on the 19th he was propoſed a ſecond time, and Dr. Bray and Mr. Melmoth undertook to inquire concerning him; on the 22nd he was finally "approved of," and Dr. Bray and Mr. Shute requeſted to deſire him to attend. On the 27th of the following January we find him propoſing as member the then faſhionable phyſician and poet, Sir Richard Blackmore, and, on March 5, taking his ſeat at the Society's meeting as chairman for the month.

On this latter occaſion, by the intereſt of Nelſon, Humphrey Wanley was appointed Secretary, and the advantage of his correſpondence kept Nelſon acquainted with the proceedings of the Society, whether he were attending his wife to the waters of Tonbridge or Bath, paying a viſit to her ſon, Sir Berkely Lucy, at Woodcote, or making a more congenial ſtay with the Berkely family at Cranford. Many of the letters have been preſerved which Nelſon addreſſed to Wanley in reply. Thus he expreſſes his confidence in the qualifications of the new Secretary:—

"You are ſo well qualified to ſerve the Society whoſe proſperity I am moſt zealouſly concerned for, that, as that engaged me firſt in your intereſt, ſo it will alwaies incline me to favour and promote it; and if I find upon any occaſions ſome of our members leſs ſenſible of it, I ſhall endeavour to ſet your merits in a true light. I perfectly ſee the difficulties you contend with, and hope a little time, with the help of your patience and prudent conduct, will entirely maſter them. I am very glad you go thro with ſettling the correſpondence upon a good foot; the putting it into a right method may cauſe ſome preſent trouble, but the future eaſe and advantage will ſufficiently recompenſe it."

On another occaſion he ſympathiſes with Wanley in the annoyance he experienced from ſome attempts of the previous Secretary, to diſlodge him from his employment. "I cannot ſufficiently wonder why Mr. Chamberlayne ſhould trouble the Society with his complaints. I muſt confeſs, I have that opinion of your conduct as to believe that it will always be ſeaſoned with piety and prudence." —"The ſervice you pay the worthy Dean of Worceſter, increaſes the value and eſteem I have for you, for I think he may deſervedly be placed in the firſt rank of the great men of this age. I beg he may have my moſt humble ſervice;" or "I am ſorry Mr. Chamberlayne continues to give you ſo much uneaſineſs; he is reſolved to make your patience as conſpicuous as your other good qualities." He wiſhes his friend "a good and merry Eaſter; and that, with a great many commendable qualities, you may preſerve the exerciſe of all Chriſtian virtues, in which are laid the ſureſt foundation of our happineſs." He reports that Mr. Bennett of Colcheſter (the well-known opponent of the Diſſenters) would become a correſpondent of the Society; he encloſes Mr. Bull's letter about undertaking a ſimilar charge; or he ſuggeſts that "if you want a correſpondent for Bath, methinks Archdeacon Clement, who lives here upon the ſpot, might be very proper for that purpoſe." Even when attending on his mother's death-bed, Nelſon does not ſuſpend his intereſt in a remonſtrance the Society was preſenting againſt the playhouſes of the day, but preſſes his friend to "let me know what is done" in it. He begs Wanley to bring with him his tranſlation of Oſtervald's "Catechiſm" to the Meeting of the Society, at Serjeant Hook's, "for I have prevailed with Dr. Stanhope to reviſe it, and have promiſed my aſſiſtance." He diſcuſſes Dr. Manningham's opinion in reference to the etymology of Maundy Thurſday,

and owns that ſome agree with him in thinking "that that being the day our Bleſſed Saviour inſtituted the Bleſſed Sacrament, and left that great *command* to them of commemorating Him in that action, it was therefore called *dies mandati;* though (he adds) Spelman derives it with much greater probability from the French word *mande*, which ſignifies *Sportula; quaſi dies Sportularum;* it being the cuſtom of the kings of France, when they waſhed the feet of the poor upon that day, to be very charitable in the diſtribution of their alms." He writes from the country, at another time, for "the minutes of the four laſt meetings, as well as thoſe of this day, that I may not be a ſtranger to the affairs of the Society. My long abſence has been partly occaſioned by a ſevere fit of the gout in both my feet, under which I labour at preſent. I was ſeized from my own home, and continue at the Counteſs Dowager of Berkeley's, at Cranford, in Middleſex, where the penny-poſt reaches." In reply to an invitation to be preſent at the annual dinner* of the Society, he regrets that his diſtance from town will prevent his "attending the ſociable and friendly meeting deſigned next Wedneſday; however, I deſire you to pay my half-crown to the ſtewards, and it ſhall be accounted for." He commiſſions Wanley to ſecure Dr. Manningham to take his place as chairman of the Society's meeting; and regrets that he will not be able to be preſent himſelf, as the dark October nights would not favour his return to Blackheath.

The removal of his reſidence from Blackheath to Ormond Street, in the autumn of 1703, enabled him now to become one of the moſt regular attendants at the weekly meetings of the Society, and his name is conſtantly occurring at this time in the minutes of its proceedings. Thus:—

* At this dinner, the 13th Chapter of 1 Corinthians was always read to the Society during the meal.

"1703. Nov. 11.—Mr. Nelson in the chair. Mr. Nelson laid upon the table a dangerous libel entitled 'The Principles of the Protestant Reformation explained,' and acquainted them with the ill principles contained and suggested therein; and also, that he had already taken care to send one of them to a Minister of State (the Earl of Nottingham) with a letter desiring him to take cognizance of the matter, and care to find out and punish the author* and printer. For which information the Society returned him thanks.

"Nov. 18.—Mr. Nelson is appointed on a committee for establishing lending libraries in Wales.

"Dec. 16.—Mr. Nelson produced before the Society the 11th volume of Tillotson's Sermons, and out of Sermon XI., on Ephesians iv. 29, he read two paragraphs against plays, on which it was agreed that the said paragraphs might be forthwith printed, and dispersed among ladies of quality, &c., with very good effect. Also that at the bottom of the said paper a query might be put, whether acting the 'Tempest' upon the next Wednesday after the late dreadful storm, at the new play-house in Little Lincoln's Inn Fields, was proper or seasonable?

"March 2.—Mr. Nelson acquainted the Society that he had received a letter from Sir John Phillips, wherein

* The author of this tract was the Rev. William Stephens, Rector of Sutton in Surrey, who, while holding cure of souls in a Christian Church, disgraced his ministerial office by a series of virulent and sarcastic pamphlets, which had the hardly disguised object of bringing religion and its ministers into contempt. For a tract of a similar character written by him in the following year, he was fined 100 marks, and sentenced to stand twice in the pillory; the latter portion of the sentence being remitted in respect for his profession, only after he had been brought to a public-house at Charing-Cross, from whence he might view the preparations for its execution.

Against his tract on the Principles of the Protestant Reformation, Nelson in vain invoked a public prosecution; and thought proper accordingly to reply to its arguments in the following Pamphlet:—"The necessity of Church Communion vindicated from the scandalous aspersions of a late Pamphlet, Entituled, The Principles of the Protestant Reformation explained, in a Letter of Resolution, concerning Church Communion. Humbly offered to the consideration of the Right Rev. and Rev. Clergy, assembled in Convocation.

"Haud Scio an pietate adversus Deos sublatâ, fides etiam et Societas humani generis, et una excellentissima virtus, Justitia, tollatur. Cicer. De Natu. Deor.

he propoſes the erection of a like workhouſe in the city of Weſtminſter, as has been erected in the city of London; he being of opinion that the ſame Act of Parliament which empowered the city of London to ſet up ſuch a workhouſe extends alſo to the liberty of Weſtminſter.

"1704. April 27.—The Secretary produced his tranſ-

"London, Printed for A. and J. Churchill, at the Black Swan in Paternoſter Row, 1705."

This very rare tract, which is preſerved in the Archiepiſcopal Library at Lambeth, is written in a mingled ſtrain of pleaſantry and indignation, and in ſtyle very much reſembles Nelſon's earlier tract on Tranſubſtantiation. It may be ſufficient to quote his rejoinder to a flippant remark of his antagoniſt, that if our Saviour were this day upon earth, He would pleaſe no party in the Church, nor be well pleaſed with them.

"Would not our Saviour, if now on earth," is Nelſon's reply, "be well pleaſed with Biſhops and Ceremonies? Firſt, if not with Ceremonies, how came he to be pleaſed in any age with the Chriſtian Church? For in all ages the Church had them; and in the 4th century they grew ſo numerous, that St. Auguſtin a little after complained of their burden. Nay, the Apostolical age was not without them; for then we read of Love Feaſts and the Kiſs of Charity, and that ſome of the Apoſtles themſelves, as St. James and St. John, wore the pontifical πέταλον; and they, we may ſuppoſe, knew much better than you or I do what would diſpleaſe their Maſter, when the one was His brother and the other His beloved diſciple. Secondly, if not with Biſhops, how came they to be always in the Catholic Church? and every particular Church in all ages to be governed by them? For tell me, in what age there were none? or in what year of our Lord their order began? Our Saviour, you know, was ſent by His Father, and as His Father ſent Him, ſo he ſent His Apoſtles, and they Biſhops; and therefore, as their commiſſion was ſacred and their order divine, ſo was it eſtabliſhed in the beginning of Chriſtianity, and Biſhops in thoſe days were governors of Churches. And hence it is, as we read, that St. James and Simeon were ſucceſſively biſhops of Jeruſalem; Evodius and Ignatius of Antioch; Linus, Anacletus and Clement of Rome; Annianus and Avilius of Alexandria; Polycarp of Smyrna, and Timothy and Titus, the one of Epheſus, the other of Crete; all of them biſhops in that age, and preſiding over their ſeveral churches before the death of the Apoſtles. And is it poſſible, think you, that our Saviour now would be diſpleaſed with his own Inſtitution, with that order of men which his Apoſtles, by virtue of that power He gave them, ſettled in His Church, and in thoſe early times too before the ſimplicity of the Goſpel, as your phraſe is, grew out of faſhion. No, no, Sir; were He now upon earth, you may aſſure yourſelf of the contrary, and that if He were diſpleaſed, it would be with the Papacy for retrenching and uſurping their power, with the Kirk of Scotland, and other Churches, for abrogating their order and advancing Preſbyters to their place and dignity. He would be pleaſed with none who abuſed that government which he eſtabliſhed, much leſs with you who have not only derided and reviled it, but alſo the whole body of the clergy, and the Church of God in all ages."

lation of the ſervice eſtabliſhed in the church of Neufchatel, which was referred to Mr. Nelſon's peruſal.

"Sept. 28.—Mr. Shute acquainted the Society that Mr. Nelſon had deſired 100 of our ſmall books about Family Devotion, and 'The Chriſtian's Way to Heaven,' to be diſtributed at Tonbridge; ordered that they be ſent accordingly.

"Nov. 2.—Ordered that 200 copies of a tract entituled 'The Whole Duty of a Chriſtian,' by way of queſtion and anſwer, be bought at the prime coſt when printed.*

"Nov. 8.—A letter from Mr. Oſtervald to the Society was read, thanking them for their preſent of books ſent to him; particularly for Mr. Nelſon's 'Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts,' which he hopes will be of great uſe in completing their ſervice at Neufchatel.

"Feb. 22.—Mr. Nelſon reported that Mr. Hodges had received a benefaction of 5l., to be laid out in Biſhop Beveridge's 'Expoſition of the Church Catechiſm,' and deſired the advice of the Society about the diſperſing of them, which the Society were of opinion might be beſt done in the dioceſe of St. David's.

"March 1.—Agreed, that Dr. Manningham and Mr. Nelſon do attend his Grace the Archbiſhop of York, and do deſire him, in the name of the Society, to print his excellent ſermon about keeping a good conſcience, which he lately preached in the church of St. Andrew's, Holborn.

"1705. April 13.—Mr. Shute propoſed for circulation by the Society a tract entituled 'Forms of Prayer, before, at, and after receiving the Holy Sacrament.' And the Society did refer it to the peruſal of Dr. Manningham and Mr. Nelſon.

"July 11.—Mr. Nelſon acquainted the Society that the Earl of Berkeley would give 25l. to the relief of the French confeſſors in the galleys."

* This Tract was compiled by Nelſon.

In Auguſt Nelſon accompanies his wife to Tonbridge for the benefit of her health, and from thence preſſes Wanley to keep him acquainted with the buſineſs of the Society. "You know when I am in London I frequently attend the affairs of your Society; and as it is in order to do all the little good I can, ſo it is very neceſſary that I may be in ſome meaſure maſter of their concerns." And, thanking him for his reply, he adds, "The weather proving very encouraging, and the waters agreeing very well with my wife, we are like to continue here till after Michaelmas; ſo that I may ſtill hope to be entertained with another of your letters." On his return to London his name again appears in the minutes of the Society.

"1705. Nov. 1.—Mr. Nelſon told the Society that he had lately received 500 Bibles and 800 Common Prayer Books, being a benefaction to this Society, who may diſperſe them where it thinks fit; and that the benefactor deſires that poor families may be furniſhed with them before any particular perſons.

"Nov. 15.—A letter was read from Mr. Bedford, of Briſtol, certifying that the players who lately acted at Briſtol ('The Provoked Wife,' among other lewd plays), are now about to return to Norwich, whence they came. Whereupon the Society did deſire Mr. Nelſon, Mr. Shute, and three other members to wait on my lord of Norwich, to apprize him of the players' deſign to return to Norwich, and that he would endeavour to prevent them.

"Nov. 29.—Mr. Nelſon has procured a benefaction of 40s., to be diſpoſed of in 'Whole Duties of Man.'"

"Dec. 5.—Mr. Nelſon writes that the other benefactor will alſo give 500 of Bray's 'Baptiſmal Covenants.'

"Dec. 20.—Agreed, that thirty of each ſort of book given by Mr. Nelſon's friend be ſent into Worceſterſhire, where he has an eſtate.

"Jan. 3.—Mr. Nelſon reported that the Lord Biſhop

of St. Asaph, is well pleased with the design of printing the Welsh Common Prayer in 12mo., toward which he will subscribe himself, and speak to the other Welsh bishops about it, which being done, Mr. Nelson shall hear from him.

"Jan. 10.—Mr. Nelson reported that the Bishop of St. Asaph had been with him, and told him that he had spoken to the Bishops of Hereford and Bangor about printing the Welsh Common Prayer-book in 12mo., which design they exceedingly approve, and will subscribe to it, and procure the subscriptions of others. That the Bishop of Hereford has a very exact Common Prayer to correct the press by. And the Bishop of St. Asaph desired Mr. Nelson to write to the Bishop of St. David's about this matter.

"Feb. 21.—A letter was read from Mr. Bull to Mr. Nelson, showing the good affection which the Lord Bishop of St. David's bears to the design of erecting libraries in Wales; that my lord has subscribed 4l. per annum during his life towards the erecting a charity-school in Carmarthenshire, and that Mr. Bull has subscribed 20s. per annum during his life to the same design. And that notice shall be given of fit persons of Brecknockshire and Cardiganshire to be invited to the correspondence, as soon as they can be pitched upon.

"Feb. 28.—Sir John Phillips reported that the committee was of opinion that Mr. Nelson should be desired to draw up a tract about the due observation of the Lord's Day, and the Secretary was ordered to signify this to him."

With this request Mr. Nelson did not think fit to comply, as appears from the following letter to Wanley in reply * :—

"Pray return my humble thanks to the Society for that favourable opinion of me which their obliging message

* March 6, 1705.

ſeems to imply; but I am very well ſatisfied that they have many worthy members much better qualified for that undertaking than I am, and therefore muſt beg their excuſe. Beſides, I have delivered my thoughts upon that ſubject, which will reach all who read my book; and as for the poorer ſort, we have half-a ſheet already upon that matter, approved by the Society, and well diſperſed, and I am againſt multiplying treatiſes without ſome improvement. I think of being at the Society myſelf next Thurſday; ſo that, if you think fit, you may ſay I will return an anſwer to your meſſage in perſon."

"1706. June 20.—A letter from Mr. Nelſon, offering the copy of a tract, entitled 'Prayers for Priſoners under Sentence of Death.'

"July 4.—A letter was read fr om Mr. Williams, of Denbigh, to Mr. Nelſon, in which he propoſes that the money raiſed by Mr. Nelſon's tract on Confirmation in Welſh (of which many are diſperſed gratis by the Biſhop of St. Aſaph and himſelf), may go as part of contribution to the Welſh Schools. To which Mr. Nelſon gave his aſſent.

"July 11.—A letter was read from Mr. Burrell to Mr. Nelſon, who among other things ſays, that one Mr. Seymour, a goldſmith, did, at his own charge, procure prayers to be read, mornings and evenings, at St. Chriſtopher's, in Threadneedle Street; the firſt inſtance of that kind.

"Aug. 8.—Upon a motion made from the ſtanding committee to the Society, Mr. Nelſon promiſed to let the Society have what number of the 'Feſtivals and Faſts' they ſhall deſire, upon the next impreſſion of it, at the ſame rate as he ſhall agree with the bookſellers about it.

"Aug. 22.—Mr. Shute produced Mr. Nelſon's 'Chriſtian Sacrifice' before the committee, and informed them that the author was willing the Society ſhould have any number of them at prime coſt, and the Society, with hearty thanks for his favor, agreed to buy 1000 of them.

"Sept 12.—Agreed that two of Mr. Nelson's 'Christian Sacrifice' should be added to the parcels made up for correspondents.

"Dec. 5.—Agreed that Mr. Nelson be desired to confer with Mr. Sare, about reprinting Bishop Bull's 'Discourse upon the Corruptions of Popery,' by itself.

"Dec. 12.—Mr. Nelson, being desired to confer with Mr. Chishull the bookseller, concerning the reprinting of Archbishop Tillotson's Sermons on Restitution, was pleased to promise to do so.

"Mr. Nelson reported that Mr. Sare would take no money for the twenty-five tracts about 'Drunkenness,' but did present them to the Society.

"Feb. 27.—Agreed that 500 copies of Bishop Bull's Tracts on Popery, with Bishop Couzins's little tract at the end of it, be bought at the charge of the Society; and Mr. Nelson promised to take charge of this matter.

"1707. Mar. 27.—The Secretary was directed to go on with his Translation of the Liturgy now established at Neufchatel, since Mr. Nelson related that Mr. Ostervald is now willing that a translation of the said liturgy may be printed.

"Mar. 27.—The case of the Archbishop of Gochtan, in Armenia, was laid before the Society by Mr. Nelson, who read a statement from Dr. Cockburn, minister of the English church at Amsterdam, to the effect that the Archbishop and his nephew, Lucas Nurigian, had long resided there for the purpose of procuring a printing-press, and to get types or letters of the Armenian character, for printing books in that language, to promote piety in their own country, and that they had now come over to England, in order to obtain funds to aid them, and to make up several losses which they had sustained. Mr. Nelson further acquainted the Society, that he had seen several of the Armenian books printed at Amsterdam, and that her Majesty and the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, being entirely satisfied with the Armenian archbishop, they had been pleased to

preſent him with their bounty, in order to the carrying on theſe his good deſigns. On which the Society agreed to allow him 10 guineas towards the diſperſing of good books, and promoting Chriſtian knowledge in his country.*

"April 17.—Mr. Nelſon related that he had moved the Archbiſhop (Teniſon) for the reprinting of his Circular Letter to the Clergy, and that his Grace ſaid he would reviſe them, and after that confer further with him about it.

"Nov. 6.—Mr. Nelſon moved for ſome of the Society's ſmall tracts for Mr. Milne, now going to Virginia.

"Dec. 4.—Mr. Nelſon related that Mr. Bennett, of Colcheſter, had given the Society 100 of his 'Neceſſity of being baptized with Water, and receiving the Lord's Supper.'

"Jan. 1.—A letter was read from Mr. Hales, dated at Zell, Dec. 17 laſt, to Mr. Chamberlayne, importing

* The continued intereſt taken by Nelſon in the affairs of this Eccleſiaſtic, is ſhown by the two following letters in his behalf, addreſſed a few months later o Wanley, who had now exchanged his employment at the Society for the more important poſt of Librarian to Harley, afterwards Earl of Oxford, the collector of the Harleian MSS. in the Britiſh Muſeum, and then Secretary of State.

"Mr. Wanley,—You will receive this by Mr. Cockburn, ſon to Dr. Cockburn, who is concerned for the Armenian Archbiſhop and his nephew Lucas Nurigian. The latter would go away to-morrow, if he has his paſs; therefore pray let him know what is, or may be done in the matter. I have taken care that the Secretary ſhall have ſpecimens of ſome books which he has printed, which Mr. Cockburn ſhall convey to you.

"I am, Sir,

"Your humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"9th June, 1707."

"Mr. Wanley,—Pray do me the favor to deliver the encloſed letter to Mr. Secretary Harley; and if he ſhall think fit to procure a royal paſs for the Archbiſhop of Gochtan, &c., with the abatement of his own fees, I deſire you to take it out of the office, and pay what may be due to his clerks, and ſend it to me, who will thankfully repay you thoſe charges. Let me hear as ſoon as you can what anſwer Mr. Secretary thinks fit to give to my letter, and you will oblige,

"Sir, your humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"Ormond-ſtreet, 5th Auguſt, 1707."

that Mr. Bontheim, Superintendant at Uleſſon, a little city about ſix German miles from Zell, has almoſt finiſhed his German verſion of Mr. Nelſon's 'Feſtivals and Faſts,' which he will cauſe to be printed, though he has received another tranſlation of it from Mr. Scherer. And that if he had had one of theſe books when it was firſt publiſhed, he would have cauſed it to be tranſlated into French by this time. That the 'Great Duty of frequenting the Chriſtian Sacrifice' being tranſlated into German by Mr. Scherer, jun., is now in the preſs, as alſo the 'Account of the Corporation Society.'* 'The Chriſtian Sacrifice' he printed at Dreſden laſt ſummer, with a tract of Dr. Woodward's, in the Bohemian tongue, the number of Proteſtants there being ſtill very great.

"1708, June 10.—Mr. Nelſon read a letter from Mr. Hutton, late of Stoke-nayland, removed to Stanford, in Berkſhire, repreſenting the ſtate of his pariſh, and deſiring a parcel of Common Prayers, and other good books, for the inſtruction of his pariſhioners.

"Sept. 16.—Mr. Raymond, of Ipſwich, having ſent one of his little tracts on 'Devotion at the Sacrament,' Mr. Nelſon was deſired to peruſe the ſame, and give his opinion of it.

"1709. April 21.—Agreed, that Mr. Nelſon be deſired to diſcourſe Mr. Hales and Mr. Scherer about the Neufchatel Liturgy, whether the copy in the Society's poſſeſſion may be thought perfect.

"June 9.—The Committee reported "that they had conſidered of Mr. Nelſon's letter of the 7th of March, and Mr. A. D. Frank's letter of the 4th of April, concerning a method of circulating books among the clergy in the country, (viz., by a ſmall annual ſubſcription for new books, and by communicating reciprocally catalogues of each other's libraries, in order to ſend what one may be provided with more than another;) and propoſe

* *i. e.* The S. P. G.

that a clauſe be inſerted in the next circular letter to correſpondents to inform them thereof.

"Dec. 22.—The Lord Biſhop of Waterford introduced by Mr. Nelſon.

"Feb. 9.—Mr. Nelſon deſires a ſmall packet of books for Mr. Pughe of Mathafarn.

"Mar. 2.—Mr. Nelſon communicated a letter from Mr. Davies, a miniſter, to Wm. Pughe of Mathafarn, in Montgomeryſhire, Eſquire, containing the Articles for regulating a Society of Clergy in that neighbourhood.

"1710. June 15.—The Ordinary of Newgate having ſuggeſted to the Society the expediency of providing for ſuch priſoners as were reprieved ſome better place than the common ſide of the priſoners, where they were expoſed to the vile practices of ſuch ill men as were there confined:—Mr. Nelſon reported that he had lately waited on Sir Peter King, and acquainted him with the ſaid motion; and that he approved of the thing; but was of opinion that it could not be done without a clauſe in ſome Act of Parliament, empowering the removal of ſuch priſoners out of Newgate before their pardons came down, which has ſometimes happened to be ſeveral years.

"Sept. 14.—Mr. Nelſon reported that he had propoſed to the Reverend Dr. Bradford the compoſing of Morning and Evening Prayers, according to a motion at the laſt meeting.

"Sept. 7.—Mr. Nelſon laid before the Society a paper entitled 'A Courſe of Catechiſing in the Pariſh of Lambeth, throughout the year.'

"Jan. 4.—Mr. Nelſon reported that Dr. Smallridge's Sermon was very well tranſlated into French, and deſigned to be printed for the uſe of foreigners.

"1711. Feb. 11.—Mr. Nelſon reported that his Grace the Archbiſhop of York has ſubſcribed for twenty copies of his book on the 'Feſtivals and Faſts' in Welſh, and deſired

the Society to accept of them, to diſperſe as they ſhall think fit.

"Feb. 28.—Mr. Nelſon acquainted the Society that a gentleman had ſuggeſted to him that he believed the many miſapplications of poor-rates might be prevented by ſome proper bill to be brought into Parliament.

"1712. July 17.—The Committee reported that they had conſidered of a paper delivered to the Society by Mr. Nelſon, the 27th of March laſt, relating to the uſe of Chriſtian authors in Grammar Schools; and are of opinion that all the Society can at preſent do to recommend the uſe of Chriſtian authors, is the publiſhing a liſt of ſuch authors as the Society ſhall approve at the end of Mr. Monro's book, now in the preſs.* And that a clauſe be inſerted in the next circular, deſiring the correſpondents to diſperſe Mr. Monro's 'Addreſs' to the maſters of Latin Schools, and others that have the care of gentlemen's ſons in their neighbourhood, and to return the opinion of ſuch maſters, together with their own, concerning it.

"July 31.—Agreed, that Dr. Higden and Mr. Nelſon be deſired to engage the Rev. Mr. Collier to write a ſmall Treatiſe, proper to be put into the hands of organiſts, and other muſick-maſters, to diſſuade them from teaching lewd ſongs, and compoſing tunes to obſcene ballads or ſongs.

"July 23.—Mr. Nelſon acquainted the Society that Mr. Midwinter and Co. had by them 500 copies of Archbiſhop Tillotſon's ſermons on the 'Nature and Neceſſity of Reſtitution,' and that the proprietors were willing to diſpoſe of them at 16s. 8d. per hundred, and that the whole parcel might be had for 4l.

"Dec. 11.—Mr. Cockburn communicated to the Society an advertiſement in the 'Poſtboy' of Tueſday laſt, giving notice of a fair to begin at Nottingham, on Thurſday in Paſſion-week next year, and to continue eight days.

* An Eſſay upon Chriſtian Education, ſhowing the neceſſity and advantage of reading Chriſtian Authors in Grammar Schools. Humbly offered to Parents and Schoolmaſters, by Geo. Monro, A.M. 1712.

Agreed, that Mr. Nelſon be deſired to recommend it to his Grace the Archbiſhop of York, to uſe his intereſt with her Majeſty to alter the time of the ſaid fair, as a precedent that may be of very ill conſequence to this and other places, if permitted.

"Jan. 22.—Mr. Nelſon reported that a gentleman of St. Giles's pariſh had preſented a dozen copies of Mr. Milbourne's ſermon on Pſalmody, preached in that pariſh, and dedicated to the Society.

"1713. Feb. 25.—Mr. Nelſon reported that a friend of his would contribute 10l. per annum towards encouraging the chaplain of the Marſhalſea Priſon, to commence from Lady-day next."

In the autumn of the ſame year Nelſon's name occurs as preſent for the laſt time in the books of the Society, viz., on Oct. 14, 1714. A fortnight later, a laſt and farewell letter was read from him at the weekly meeting, previouſly to his leaving town for better air at Kenſington. And on the 3rd of the February following, his old aſſociates in charity received the news of a final expreſſion of ſympathy from the zealous and kindly fellow-labourer whom they had loſt; and "Mr. Hoare reported that Mr. Nelſon, lately deceaſed, had ordered him by his will, as one of his executors, to pay 100l. to the Society, for promoting their deſigns."

4. *The Charity Schools.*

The erection of Charity Schools makes ſo diſtinguiſhing a feature of the religious movement of Queen Anne's reign, and the part which Robert Nelſon took in their eſtabliſhment was ſo prominent and active, as to claim for them a ſeparate notice in this enumeration of "his ways and methods of doing good." The firſt ſtimulus to this educational effort ſeems to have been given by the opening of a large Roman Catholic ſchool in the Savoy in the latter

part of James the Second's reign, to counteract the influence of which Tenison established a Protestant school at St. Martin's, and some other zealous Churchmen set up the Bluecoat School in St. Margaret's, Westminster. The good work was resumed in a less controversial spirit toward the end of William's reign, and under Queen Anne revived and increased to such a remarkable extent, that within fifteen years (ending 1712), as many as 117 Schools* were set up in London and Westminster, and nearly 5000 poor children had received instruction in them, of whom more than 4000 had been clothed as well as taught, and 2000 had been put out as apprentices. Within the same period more than 500 schools had been established in England and Wales, while the good work had extended to Protestant Ireland, and to the plantations of New England and New York. Additional stimulus was given to these charitable exertions, by the account of Professor Frank's establishments at Halle, which Mr. Bœhm translated into English:† while, in return, the "Account of the English Charity Schools," being translated into German, and circulated on the Continent, gave occasion to the establishment of similar institutions in Hesse, in Sweden and Denmark, and in some parts of Switzerland and Russia.

These schools were established and supported almost entirely by members of the Church of England, which then, as now, by her care for national education, showed

* See "An Account of Charity Schools in Great Britain and Ireland, with the benefactions thereto, and of the methods whereby they are set up and governed. Also a proposal for adding some work to the children's learning; and an Appendix relating to certain Forms and Directions relating to the Schools." The 11th edition, with large additions. 1712.

† "Pietas Hallensis, or a public demonstration of the Footsteps of a divine Being yet in the world, in an Historical Narration of the Orphans-house and other Charitable Institutions at Glaucha, near Halle, in Saxony, by Augustus Hermannus Franck. 1705." No one who is engaged in charitable works, could read this affecting narration of Franck's, without being touched and bettered byit.

herſelf the true nurſing mother of the people. The clergy were almoſt everywhere among the earlieſt promoters of them, and the education which was given in them was diſtinctively religious. The maſter was not only to be a member of the Church, but "one that frequents the holy Communion, and who is approved by the miniſter of the pariſh before he is preſented to be licenſed by the ordinary." He was to "make it his chief buſineſs to inſtruct the children in the principles of the Chriſtian religion, as they are laid down in the Church Catechiſm, which he ſhall firſt teach them to pronounce diſtinctly and plainly, and then, in order to practiſe, ſhall explain it by ſome good expoſition approved of by the miniſter; and ſhall afterwards more largely inform them of their duty by the help of the 'Whole Duty of Man.'" He was to "take particular care of the manners and behaviour of the poor children, and by all proper methods ſhall diſcourage and correct the beginnings of vice, and particularly lying, ſwearing, curſing, taking God's name in vain, and the prophanation of the Lord's Day; at the ſame time minding them of ſuch parts of the Holy Scriptures and of the Catechiſm, where thoſe things are mentioned as forbidden by God, and the contrary things as commanded; whereby the children may the better underſtand the uſe of the Holy Scripture and their Catechiſm, and learn to govern their lives thereby." He was to teach the children to pray at home, when they riſe and go to bed, and to uſe grace before and after meat; he was to bring them to church twice every Lord's Day and holiday, and "ſhall teach them to behave with all reverence while they are in the Houſe of God." And not unfrequently he had to attend divine ſervice with his ſcholars every day*. Morning and evening prayers were

* Thus at Chevening, Kent, was a ſchool for teaching and clothing 30 poor children, who are obliged to accompany the miſtreſs morning and even-

printed for the uſe of the children at home, and "Rules and advice for the parents" were ordered to be ſtuck up in their houſes. The ſcholars were not loſt ſight of when they went out into the world. Forms of prayer were drawn up for apprentices on leaving ſchool for trade or ſervice, and the old ſcholars were aſſembled once a year and a ſermon preached before them ſuitable to the occaſion. An admirable Book of Devotion * was written for the poor boys by Mr. Brewſter, of Lincoln's Inn, full of piety and kindlineſs. While Dr. Talbot, of Spofforth, in his "Chriſtian Schoolmaſter," endeavoured to form the character of their teachers.

The ſtandard of ſecular inſtruction in theſe ſchools was ſober and ſenſible rather than ambitious. The boys were taught reading, writing, and the grounds of arithmetic "to fit them for ſervice and apprenticeſhip." It was thought ſufficient to teach the girls to read, to knit their ſtockings and gloves, to mark and ſew, and make and mend their clothes. Induſtrial occupation was frequently introduced, and the children were taught to ſpin, and card wool, to mend and make ſhoes. Boys of unuſual parts were eſpecially noticed. The education of adults was not forgotten, and maſters and miſtreſſes were "recommended to appoint ſome evening in the week, to teach ſuch grown people to read, who have been neglected in their youth." Our evening ſchools were anticipated. And particular mention is made of the worthy clergyman of Mepſale in Bedford-

ing to church. At Finedon, Northants, "A ſchool for lodging and clothing and dieting 20 girls, and teaching them to read, write, and work. They go daily to prayers at the Pariſh Church." At Sheldon in Warwickſhire, "A ſchool has been built by a perſon of quality, adjoining to the church, where the children go to prayers every day." See Account of Charity Schools, as above.

* "The Chriſtian Scholar; in Rules and Directions for Children and Youth ſent to Engliſh Schools; more eſpecially deſigned for the poor boys taught and clothed by charity in the Pariſh of St. Botolph Aldgate." 3rd edition. 1704. Well worth reprinting.

ſhire (a Mr. Salmon), who "has with great ſucceſs prevailed upon the youth of his pariſh to go to ſchool to learn to read and write, and their Catechiſm, in the cloſe of the winter evenings, and on the ſervants of the ſaid pariſh to come to him once a week for inſtruction."

The ſchools were all ſupported by the voluntary contributions of charity, nor does it ſeem to have ever occurred to any of their promoters to have recourſe to pecuniary grants from the State. Thus in the pariſh of St. Giles-in-the-Fields, nearly 400l. was raiſed from voluntary ſubſcriptions and collections at church. At the faſhionable watering place of Tunbridge Wells, 70 children were taught by the contributions of the nobility and gentry who reſorted thither. At Benwell in Northumberland, the proprietors of a colliery ſet up a ſchool for the children of the pitmen. At Box in Wiltſhire, the miniſter gave his Eaſter dues for the purpoſe. At Cambridge, many of the colleges gave their Communion-money. At Cuddeſden, twelve poor girls were put to ſchool at the Biſhop's charge. At Saliſbury, we are told, the whole expenſe of one ſchool was borne by Biſhop Burnet, "who frequently viſits and catechiſes the children, and ſets them portions of Scripture to get by heart, which he ſees performed himſelf, and then rewards and encourages their diligence by giving them Common Prayer books, money, &c." At Durham, the Dean and Chapter ſupported a ſchool of ſeventy boys. At St. Neot's, the ſchool was erected chiefly by the miniſter and the religious ſociety in that place. At Cranford in Middleſex, Lady Berkeley was the patron. At Shoreham, the ſame experiment was tried which has been repeated at King's Somborne in our own times, viz., that of making the ſchool ſelf-ſupporting by the joint education of children of different grades; and "perſons of ability gave more than the ſchooling of their own children, that the maſter might have ſuch an income as might enable him to teach the children of the

poor gratis." In many churches of the metropolis, charity ſermons were preached monthly or quarterly for the maintenance of the ſchools, and general intereſt was ſtill further enliſted by conſtant catechiſing of the children at church, and by quarterly ſchool examinations at nine or ten places in town, at five o'clock in the evening, open to the public; as well as by an annual aſſemblage of the ſchool children at St. Sepulchre's Church, the original of the preſent anniverſary meeting in St. Paul's Cathedral.

In the eſtabliſhment of theſe ſchools throughout the country, in all the details of their management, and in every exertion for their ſupport, we ſee Robert Nelſon exhibiting the moſt conſtant and active intereſt. He had hardly been three months a member of the Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge before we find him writing for a printed form of the uſual preamble for eſtabliſhing a ſchool. The minutes of the Society ſhow him in correſpondence with the promoters of ſchools at York, at Nayland in Suffolk, at Oxford, Beverley, Leiceſter, Wootton-under-Edge, Bray in Berkſhire, Cirenceſter, and Tring. We find him ſubſcribing to ſchools in Hampſhire and at Queen-Hithe, and intereſting himſelf to procure a maſter for St. Ann's Soho, and for Bath. He was on the committee of St. Andrew's School, Holborn, and the chief promoter of that attached to St. George's Chapel, Queen-ſquare, in the veſtry of which he, with the other truſtees and Dr. Marſhall, the miniſter of the chapel, would examine the children in their progreſs, on the firſt Friday of every month, after evening prayer. He compiled a practical Catechiſm * for the charity ſchools out of the "Whole Duty of Man," and one of his laſt labours was to read over a tranſlation of

* "The Whole Duty of a Chriſtian by way of Queſtion and Anſwer, exactly purſuant to the method of the Whole Duty of Man, and deſigned for the uſe of the charity ſchools in and about London." 1704. It ran through 12 editions in the courſe of the century.

Dean Nowell's Catechiſm, which had been prepared for their uſe.* Of the annual meeting of the ſchools he ſeems to have been the recogniſed ſuperintendent, and the arrangement of its details was left, year after year, in his charge.

A few extracts from the minutes of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, may again be given in illuſtration of this part of his charitable labours.

"1702. Oct. 8.—A letter from Mr. Nelſon, deſiring that he may apply 4l. per ann., being part of his annual ſubſcription in this Society, toward two Schools in Hampſhire, towards which he has very largely contributed. Agreed that Mr. Nelſon have leave to apply 4l. per ann. according to his deſire.

"1705. April 5.—Mr. Nelſon reported that the truſtees of the charity ſchools had met, and that the poor children would walk in proceſſion to St. Sepulchre's Church, the Thurſday in Whitſun week; and that he had written to the Dean of Canterbury (Dr. Stanhope) to preach the ſermon, who was pleaſed not to decline it.

"Nov. 15.—Mr. Nelſon read part of a letter, certifying that at York the boys' ſchool flouriſhes, and that there are alſo twenty-eight girls taught and maintained as the boys are, by the ſubſcription and countenance of divers ladies and gentlemen, among whom the Lord Mayor has done much, and lately dined them in public.

"1706. Sept. 12.—A letter from Mr. Nelſon to Mr. Shute, deſiring a ſmall parcel to diſperſe in a charity ſchool at Cranford in Middleſex, to which a lady of quality allows 10l. per annum.

"Jan. 23.—A letter from Mr. Garden of Nayland to

* "The Element of Chriſtian Piety, being an explanation of the Commandments, Creed, Lord's Prayer, and Sacraments. To which are added ſome Meditations and Prayers. Deſigned particularly for the uſe of the Charity Schools, and recommended by the late Robert Nelſon, Eſq." 1715. See Preface.

Mr. Nelſon, importing that Mr. Hutton has procured ſubſcriptions for a charity ſchool there, and deſiring ſome of the 'School Sermons,' and 'Duties of Children and Servants,' which were ordered to be ſent to Mr. Nelſon.

"1707. June 5.—Mr. Nelſon acquainted the Society that Mr. Gaſtrel did this day preach an excellent ſermon at the meeting of the poor children at St. Sepulchre's Church; and the Society deſired Mr. Nelſon and Mr. Chamberlayne to give their thanks to B^r^ Gaſtrel for the ſame, and to deſire him to cauſe the ſaid excellent ſermon to be printed.

"1708. Feb. 3.—Mr. Nelſon acquainted the Society, that the ſubſcription to the charity ſchool in Queen's Square, near St. George's Chapel, amounted to about 70l. per annum, and that the Lord Biſhop of Saliſbury preaching * at the Chapel laſt Lord's Day in the morning, and Mr. Haſlewood, in the afternoon; the collections that followed amounted to about 30l. including the offering money.

"May 12.—Mr. Nelſon communicated a letter he received from ſome unknown hands at Oxford, of the 14th of April, acquainting him that ſeveral gentlemen of the Univerſity, obſerving the ſtreets filled with idle children, notwithſtanding the City and Univerſity have ſet out two very conſiderable charity ſchools, to which the ſaid gentlemen have been ſubſcribers, they have reſolved to erect another toward which they have ſubſcribed between 50l. and 60l., and opened a ſchool for about ninety children, moſt of 'em girls; upon which they deſire Mr. Nelſon's advice how to apply their fund to the beſt advantage, and likewiſe to furniſh 'em with rules for the better government of the ſchools.

"1709, Feb. 10.—Mr. Nelſon is deſired to inform

* Sermons are ſubſequently reported as having been preached at the chapel by Sir Wm. Dawes, then Biſhop of Cheſter; by Dr. Wilſon, the Venerable Biſhop of Man; by Dr. Biſſe, Biſhop of St. David's, Blackall of Exeter, Wake of Lincoln, and Smallridge, afterwards Biſhop of Briſtol; whoſe ſervices we may well ſuppoſe to have been ſolicited by Nelſon on behalf of his parochial ſchools.

ſome gentlemen who are ſetting up a ſchool at Beverly, as to the method obſerved in the pariſh of St. Margaret's, Weſtminſter, where many of the poor children are employed in ſpinning of wool and weaving, others in mending and making of ſhoes, others in ſewing, knitting, &c. As alſo that the ſchools at Wapping, and other places near the Sea, have been employed in picking of oakham, &c.

"1710. Mar. 8.—Mr. Nelſon reported that the truſtees of St. George's Charity School had recommended two children out of that School, to the ſchool lately opened for teaching navigation, by Mr. John Pullen.

"1711. April 19.—The Society being informed that Mr. Nelſon would ſhortly take a journey into Bath:—Agreed, that Mr. Treaſurer and the Secretary furniſh Mr. Nelſon with all the advices formerly ſent to the Society, concerning the meaſures taken to erect a charity ſchool at Bath, and that he be deſired to uſe his intereſt to promote the ſame.

"June 21.—Mr. Nelſon reported that Mr. Skeete and himſelf were juſt now come from meeting the truſtees of St. Andrew's School, in Holborn, and that they had given leave to Mr. Dickſon, one of the maſters of the Charity School in St. Andrew's pariſh, to go to the Bath ſchool for a twelvemonth, till the ſchool there is formed, upon condition that he ſhall return at the end of the twelvemonth, and in the meantime provide an able perſon to ſupply the ſchool in his abſence."

The minutes * of this School, (now known as the Blue-coat School, Bath), ſupply further details of Nelſon's endeavour for its eſtabliſhment, he being at the pains to ſend from London, at the requeſt of its promoters, not only a maſter to ſettle the methods of teaching, but even a pattern of the ſchool-dreſs which was to be worn by the children; and receiving in return a formal letter of thanks from the truſtees for his ſhare in the charitable

* Communicated by the kindneſs of J. H. Markland, Eſq., D.C.L.

undertaking. The ſame minutes alſo preſerve two admirable letters of advice from Nelſon to Mr. Dixon, the ſchoolmaſter above-mentioned, who ſeems to have been inclined, at the expiration of the twelvemonth, to quit his poſt at Bath, for a poſition of greater emolument in town.

"March 20, 1711.

"Mr. Dixon.—I hope you have received my letter to you, which was encloſed in Mr. Leaſons. I can aſſure you all your friends in town were much concerned when they heard you had thoughts of quitting Bath; they take your ſucceſs in that place to be an indication of the call of Providence to reſide there, and can you be inſenſible of God's great goodneſs which vouchſafes to make you ſo great an inſtrument of His ſervice? I can only tell you that if you ſhould remove from Bath, your friends would not have ſo good an opinion of your Chriſtian zeal as they entertain at preſent, nor is it probable you would do ſo much in another place. When we have uſed our utmoſt diligence we ſeldom attain our end without the bleſſing of God. He has been pleaſed to proſper the ſeed you have ſown at Bath; but if you think that to be wholly the effect of your own endeavours, and imagine you can do the ſame everywhere, removing upon human conſideration to another place, may convince you by dear-bought experience that you are miſtaken. Quiet your own mind, and reſolve to go on in that good way you are engaged in, where you will not only inſtruct children, but be an inſtrument of doing good to others.

"I am ſorry you mention the difference of a little more certain profit at London. Conſider where you in conſcience think you can do moſt good, tho' in my former letter I have ſaid enough to you upon that head. Oh remember what will turn to the beſt account at the great day, and purſue it. What I have wrote is the effect of great kindneſs to you, being ſincerely,

"Your moſt affectionate friend,

"Robert Nelson."

"March 29, 1712.

"Mr. Dixon,—I have for a great while expected to hear from you, and chiefly to know your reſolution in regard to your fixing at Bath, where the providence of God ſeems to determine your abode, by reaſon of that large field of doing good that is there prepared for you. I do not queſtion but that the advantages are equal to what you received at London, tho' you may remember that I always told you that I would take care to ſee you ſatisfied as to that particular, if the truſtees ſhould be backward in giving you the allowance you expected. It is certain if the truſtees of St. Andrew's require your return when the year expires, you are obliged to comply with it; but if they will diſpenſe with your abſence, as I have great reaſon to think they will, your friends here are of the opinion that you cannot do better than to continue at Bath, where God has already ſo extraordinarily bleſt your endeavours, and where you have ſo reaſonable a proſpect of doing a great deal of more good. I hope you will prefer thoſe circumſtances which will enable you to do Almighty God moſt ſervice, and therefore I am very much pleaſed with the reſolution you have taken of being ſilent upon this occaſion; from whence I conclude that if your truſtees here in town give leave, you are determined to fix at the Bath. I hope you will never ſtagger concerning it, I will take care to diſpoſe all matters ſo at London that no blame may be laid upon you for altering your mind; and you may depend upon my intereſt, and that of all our friends to ſerve and oblige you in anything, if you continue in your poſt at Bath.

"As I heartily pray for you, ſo I deſire you to remember me in your moſt retired hours. Your friend Mr. Tayler, as you deſired, is choſe Secretary to the Corporation for Propagating the Goſpel in Foreign Parts.

"I am, with great ſincerity,

"Your faithful, affectionate friend,

"Rob. Nelson."

It is pleaſing to be able to add that theſe excellent letters

of advice prevailed with this worthy ſchoolmaſter to continue and do his duty in the poſt in which God had ſo evidently placed him; and that afterwards, when one of the Biſhops, having liſtened to his Sunday evening inſtruction of his ſcholars, offered him holy orders with a proviſion in the Church, the advice of his former friend prompted him modeſtly to decline it, on the ground that he could do more good in his ſchool than in a parochial cure.*

To reſume our extracts from the Minutes of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge.

"1711. Jan. 31.—Mr. Jennings and Mr. Nelſon are deſired to requeſt the Dean and Chapter of St. Paul's to permit the uſe of the Cathedral for the meeting of the charity ſchools.

"Feb. 7.—Mr. Skeete reported that John Honeycott, the maſter of the charity ſchool at Clerkenwell, had yeſterday, with the children of the above ſchool, publicly acted

* These particulars, with others, are to be found in "The Parents' and Schoolmaster's Spiritual Aſſiſtant, for grounding their children and thoſe under their care in found Chriſtian principles, according to the Church of England; agreeable to the late Mr. Henry Dixon's inſtructions in the Charity School at Bath, on Sundays, and the principal feſtivals in the evening; by the plan of Mr. Nelſon's Feſtivals, who recommended him." London, 1761. The author gives the following account of this worthy man, whoſe character reminds us of James Davies of Devauden. "Mr. Henry Dixon was born in London in 1675, who may truly be ſaid to have been a ſincere lover of God and man, for the whole courſe of his life was a continued ſeries of promoting the glory of one, and the preſent and everlaſting happineſs of the other. Before he ſaw 20 years, he was maſter of St. Andrew's School in Holborn, from whence he was recommended at the inſtitution of that in Bath by Robert Nelſon, Eſqr., who was one of the firſt propoſers of it, and the firſt collector at the door of the Abbey for it. His zeal for propagating ſound Chriſtian principles hath appeared, not only from his Sunday evening inſtructions, which edified numbers who attended them, as well as his own ſcholars (a audable example for ſchoolmaſters), but alſo from his admirable *Engliſh Inſtructor*, which hath paſſed through 21 editions, whoſe leſſons are formed on the plan of our Church Catechiſm, inculcating on thoſe tender minds their duty to God, their neighbor, and themſelves; as alſo from other uſeful tracts now extant, whereby, though being dead, he yet ſpeaketh, and will live

the play called Timon of Athens, and by tickets ſigned by himſelf had invited ſeveral people to it. And Mr. Skeete laying before the Society an original ticket, together with an account of ſeveral obſervations made by a friend of his who was preſent at the ſaid entertainment, both which being read, it was agreed, that the acting of the ſaid play by the maſter and children of the charity ſchool at Clerkenwell is a great reproach to the deſign of charity ſchools, and that it is highly worthy the deſign of the Society to bear teſtimony againſt it as ſcandalous and of pernicious conſequence to the charity ſchools in general.

"Agreed, that Dr. Gaſtrell and Mr. Nelſon be deſired to give the thanks of the Society to Sir Richard Hoare and Mr. Henry Hoare for interpoſing their good offices to prevent the act of the charity ſchool at Clerkenwell.

"Feb. 14.—Mr. Jennings and Mr. Nelſon are deſired to wait on the Biſhop of London to requeſt him to withdraw Honeycott's licence.

"Mr. Nelſon reported that, being informed the Biſhop of Cheſter was to preach laſt Lord's Day at St. Magnus for a collection in favor of the charity ſchool at Clerken-

in the memory of many worthy and conſiderable men bred up by him, whoſe grand-children he hath with pleaſure beheld. He had a great knowledge of human nature, was enriched with the ornament of a meek ſpirit, whereby he prevailed over the children in the tendereſt and moſt affectionate manner, ſhowing the greateſt marks of his eſteem to thoſe who moſt regarded his inſtructions, and were forwardeſt in attending religious duties, which raiſed an emulation in the others to obtain it. He had ſuch a ſhare of Chriſtian sympathy, that when a diſtreſſed object (which none could be readier to relieve according to his ability) was propoſed to him, tears fell from his eyes, and the pleaſure he enjoyed in relieving them was to him a continual feaſt. On my recommending one, I deſired he would excuſe me in the many ſuch liberties I had taken. He replied, 'My dear friend, you have favoured me beyond this poor creature in giving me ſuch a freſh pleaſure in doing good, which none know but thoſe who do it.' He was a great admirer of church music, wrote a tract upon its 'Uſe and Abuſe,' and often reflected on ſome of the organiſts in the Metropolis for introducing light airs into their voluntaries, which ſhould conſiſt of nothing but what tends to elevate the ſoul to the divine object of adoration. On the 24th October, 1760, in the 85th year of his age, he was taken to the heavenly choir, to be preſent among the angels in their harmonious concert, and to add his hallelujah."

well, and having waited on his lordſhip laſt Friday, he acquainted him with the late behaviour of the maſter and ſcholars of the ſaid charity ſchool, and that his lordſhip thereupon reſolved not to preach for the ſaid ſchool.*

"Feb. 28.—Mr. Nelſon acquainting the Society that a friend of his had informed him that a Bill was intended to be brought into the Parliament in favor of charity ſchools, and deſired him to ſuggeſt clauſes to promote their welfare. He therefore moved the Society would give him their advice thereon.

"1712. April 3.—Agreed, that Sir Chriſtopher Wren be waited on with the ſcheme for accommodating the charity ſchool children in St. Paul's, and that Mr. Nelſon and Mr. Jennings be acquainted with Sir Chriſtopher's opinion.†

"Nov. 13.—Mr. Nelſon acquainted the Society that he had obſerved an advertiſement this day in the 'Poſt Boy' of a charity ſermon to be preached next Sunday at All Hallows, Lombard Street, notwithſtanding notice had been given to all ſchools about town not to publiſh ſuch advertiſements, which ſerved only to draw together a mob, and to keep away thoſe that would contribute on ſuch occaſions.

"April 30.—Mr. Nelſon is deſired to recommend it to the truſtees of the charity ſchools in general, to give direction to the reſpective maſters and miſtreſſes, ſtrictly to charge the children under their care to obſerve a due decorum in their behaviour at church upon that day (viz., the anni verſary meeting), and to keep ſilence when the ſervic requires it.‡

"June 4.—The Society being informed of the ſtate of

* The iſſue of this affair was, that Nelſon and others were appointed to meet the Committee of the Clerkenwell School upon the matter, the unfortunate ſchoolmaſter was ſeverely reprimanded, and made his humble ſubmiſſion accordingly.

† Wren objected, under the apprehenſion of injury that might be done to the fittings of the church.

‡ This was in conſequence of 'the noiſe made by the children' the previous year, which "ſeveral gentlemen complained of as very offenſive."

that School, Mr. Nelſon was pleaſed to pay 5l. yearly towards encouraging of it, as a benefaction from a perſon that deſires to be unknown: Agreed that Mr. Jennings and Dr. Pelling be deſired to acquaint the Biſhop of London with what paſſed at Hampſtead laſt Sunday,* to the prejudice of Queen Hithe Charity School that were at church there, and to deſire his Lordſhip's countenance againſt ſuch obſtructions for the future.

"Feb. 26.—It was reported from the Committee, that they had conſidered of Mr. Oſborne's letter of the 14th of November, about a clauſe for appropriating legacies to pious uſes unappropriated for the benefit of charity ſchools in pariſhes where ſuch legacies ſhall be found.—Agreed, that Mr. Jennings, Mr. Meller, Mr. Cotton, and Mr. Nelſon, or any two of them, be deſired to recommend to the lords biſhops the bringing in a Bill for this purpoſe this ſeſſion of Parliament.

"1713. April 16.—Mr. Nelſon reported that the truſtees of the charity ſchools had reſolved to find out a way to place the children in view of the Queen, as ſhe paſſes to St. Paul's Cathedral, on the Thankſgiving-day; and that, in order to levy money to defray the expenſe of it, they had agreed to advance ſixpence for each child.

"July 16.—Mr. Nelſon reported that on the Thankſgiving-day for the Peace, on the 7th current, 3925 charity-children, boys and girls, new clothed, with their maſters and miſtreſſes, were placed on a machine or gallery in the Strand, which was in length above 600 feet, and had in breadth eight ranges of ſeats, one above another, whereby

* This oppoſition at Hampſtead to a collection for the Queen Hithe Charity School, may be explained by the hiſtory of a ſimilar diſturbance at Chiſlehurſt, on occaſion of a collection for St. Anne's School, Alderſgate, which lay under the imputation of being High-Church and Jacobite. See the trial of the Rev. Mr. Wm. Hendley, for preaching a charity ſermon at Chiſlehurſt in Kent, for the charity children of St. Anne's, Alderſgate, London; and of George Campman, Robert Hicks, Filiar Harding, and Walter Pratt, the Schoolmaſter and Truſtees for the charity children, for collecting money for the ſame, at Rocheſter Aſſizes in Kent, before Sir Littleton Powys, Knt., A. D. 1719. State Trials, vol. xv., p. 1407.

they were put in the full view of both Houſes of Parliament, in their proceſſion to St. Paul's upon that occaſion;* that it was deſigned as a piece of reſpect to the Queen; and tho' her Majeſty was not preſent, ſuch a proſpect of charity gave great ſatisfaction to all the ſpectators; that the charge was defrayed by the truſtees of the ſeveral charity ſchools which appeared that day.

"Aug. 24.—Mr. Nelſon reported that Dr. Waugh had this day preached an excellent ſermon before a conſiderable number of apprentices and other ſervants, educated in the charity ſchools in and about London.

"1714. April 8.—Mr. Nelſon reported that the truſtees for charity ſchools had agreed to deſire the Biſhop of London to preach the ſermon at the Anniverſary Meeting of the charity ſchools in and about London, and that his lordſhip had been pleaſed to promiſe to comply with their deſire, God giving him life and health.

"Sept. 23.—Mr. Nelſon reported that on the King's entry, on the 20th of September current, about 4000

* An engraving of this exhibition of the charity ſchool children, was made by Geo. Virtue for Nelſon's friend Sir Richard Hoare, the then Lord Mayor; for which Nelſon alſo endeavoured to procure the encouragement of royal bounty, as appears from the two following letters to the Earl of Oxford.

"My Lord,—I beg leave to acquaint your lordſhip that I believe greater expedition might be given to the plates concerning the charity-children, if the perſon (Mr. Virtue) who does them ſhould receive fifty pounds at preſent, which I gave him reaſon to expect. I am, with great reſpect, my lord, your lordſhip's moſt obedient and moſt humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson."

"April 7, 1714."

"My Lord,—I am required by my worthy neighbor the Dean, to return his moſt humble thanks to your lordſhip for the royal bounty you have procured for Mrs. Elſtob; ſhe wants only to ſet the preſs to work; and, therefore, ſhe humbly begs that your lordſhip would be pleaſed to deſpatch the affair. I crave leave alſo at the ſame time to remind your lordſhip of the Queen's encouragement for carrying on the plates of the machine erected for the charity-children in the Strand, which are in great forwardneſs. I am with great zeal and reſpect, my lord, your lordſhip's moſt obedient and moſt humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson."

"June 18, 1714."

children of the charity ſchools appeared on a machine, containing ſix ranges of ſeats, 600 feet long, from eaſt to weſt, on the ſouth ſide of St. Paul's Cathedral, erected at the charge of the truſtees of the ſeveral charity ſchools, and that as the King paſſed by, and during moſt of the proceſſion, the children ſang the firſt ſix verſes of the 21ſt Pſalm, according to Sir John Denham's verſion.

"Mr. Chamberlayne reported that his Royal Highneſs the Prince was pleaſed to ſay, that the charity-children was one of the fineſt ſights he ever ſaw in his life, and that he only wiſhed his own children had been with him to have ſeen them at the ſame time.

5. *Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel in Foreign Parts.*

The Incorporated Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel in Foreign Parts was, as is well known, an early offshoot of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge. The latter Society had charged itſelf on its eſtabliſhment with the promotion of miſſionary deſigns in the plantations; but, upon Dr. Bray's return from his labours as Commiſſary of Maryland, in 1701, he judged it deſirable to ſet up a ſeparate and incorporated ſociety for that ſpecial object, and laid before the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge the draught of a charter, which (on his petition) the King was pleaſed to grant, June 16, 1701. The charter recited the inſufficient maintenance, or the total abſence of miniſters of the Church, in the plantations, colonies, and factories beyond the ſeas, ſo that the population "do want the adminiſtration of God's Word and Sacraments, and ſeemed to be abandoned to atheiſm and infidelity;" and "divers Romiſh prieſts and Jeſuits are the more encouraged to draw them over to Popiſh ſuperſtition and idolatry." And the new Corporation was charged

accordingly with "the receiving, managing, and disposing of charity given for the maintenance of an orthodox clergy, and for making such other provision as may be necessary for the propagation of the Gospel in those parts." In the list of the original members nominated by the charter, and among whom are to be found most of the leading members of the elder Society, the name of Robert Nelson does not occur; an omission which may be owing to his known disaffection to the Government as a Nonjuror. The omission, however, was speedily and honourably repaired; and, on November 21 of the same year we find "Mr. Nelson of Blackheath" elected member of the Society, in company with Burnet and nine other of the bishops, and Colonel Nicholson, Lieutenant-Governor of Virginia. Here he continually met the different prelates of the Establishment, who agreed in giving the new Society their unanimous and cordial support; Archbishop Tenison, in particular, who had warmly interested himself in the application for a charter, frequently presiding at its meetings, and urging the establishment of Colonial bishops, for which he left 1000*l.* to the Society at his death.* Here, too, Nelson met, month after month, his old friends of the clergy, Bray, Beveridge, and Mapletoft, Gastrell, and Marshall, the minister of St. George's Chapel; with White Kennett, who, if not one of Nelson's warmest friends, deserves an honourable mention here, as one of the most zealous and laborious promoters of our first Missionary Society. Here, too, he was accustomed to see the familiar faces of his friends Melmoth, Brewster, and Blackmore, and was brought into

* In a codicil of his will, Tenison thus expresses his sense of their necessity:—"Until such lawful appointments and consecrations are completed, I am very sensible (as many of my brethren of that Society also are) that as there has not been, notwithstanding much importunity and many promises to the contrary; so there never will or can be any regular church discipline in those parts, or any confirmations, or due ordinations, or any setting apart in ecclesiastical manner of any public places for the more decent worship of God."

contact with John Evelyn, as kindred a ſpirit to his own as the record of our Engliſh worthies would ſupply.

Under their direction Nelſon ſaw miſſionaries, catechiſts, and ſchoolmaſters ſent out to the Engliſh colonies in New York, Pennſylvania, Newfoundland, Rhode Iſland, and New Jerſey; a ſettlement of Welſh was ſupplied with a miniſter of their own language, and a clergyman provided for the "poor Palatine" emigrants. Two miſſionaries were ſent to the Iroquois, and another to the negroes of Gooſe Creek, in South Carolina. The arrival of four Indian Sachems in London, in 1710, lent an additional ſtimulus to the work of converſion, and the Queen gave 400*l.* for a miſſion poſt and chapel in their country. A young chieftain of the Yammouſea Indians, being brought over to England, was baptiſed by Biſhop Compton in the chapel of Somerſet Houſe. The Morning and Evening Prayer, with the Goſpel of St. Matthew, and ſome other portions of Scripture, were tranſlated into the Mohawk language, and, in 1713, the Society's miſſionary was able to report eighteen communicants, on Chriſtmas Day laſt, from that once dreaded tribe. To the Engliſh factory at Moſcow were ſent out a number of Greek Teſtaments and prayer books; a grant of books was made for the uſe of the Engliſh at St. Helena; a donation was voted towards the erection of an Engliſh church at Amſterdam, for which we have ſeen Nelſon ſoliciting his friend Pepys; a ſuitable reſidence was purchaſed at Burlington for an American biſhop; and an edition of the Common Prayer in Dutch was printed for the ſettlers in New York.

Of the perſonal ſhare which Nelſon took in the promotion of theſe miſſionary efforts, the records of the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel have preſerved but a meagre notice. We find him preſent month after month at the meetings of the Society at St. Martin's Library; becoming the medium, year after year, of repeated benefactions from

his brother-in-law, Lord Berkeley, and from his Countess; reporting a donation of "5*l.* from a lady in the neighbourhood of St. George's Chapel, who desires to be unknown;" proposing his friend Smalridge as a member; auditing Dr. Bray's accounts on behalf of the Society; making out a list of the libraries which had been sent out by it to the Plantations, and serving on a committee for considering in detail the establishment of colonial fees, in pursuance of the resolution,—"That it is the sense of this Society, that, for the better and more effectual advancement and settlement of religion in America, it is very expedient that bishops and bishoprics be established there." (May 2, 1712.)

The deep interest which he took in such missions may be better inferred from the mention he makes of this Society,* in his "Ways and Methods of Doing Good," and from the regret he expresses† that it "being limited by its charter to the British plantations and dominions in the West Indies, cannot, as a Society, engage itself in propagating the Christian faith in Asia and Africa, or in some parts of Europe, which lie to this day in heathenish darkness, notwithstanding that there is at the same time a settled correspondence and commerce with them, as to the things of the earth." He takes notice of the encouragement which the Christian Knowledge Society, being under no such limitations, felt itself at liberty to give to the Danish missionaries in Malabar. "But it were much to be wished,"

* "Address to Persons of Quality and Estate," p. 117.

† He writes similarly to Dr. Mapletoft (St. Luke's Day, 1710) :—

"I will to-morrow communicate your letter to the Society, who are very much disposed to encourage the mission in the East: I think it is a pity that our charter confines all our endeavours of that kind to the Western Plantations. I enclose you what has been done already, and I hope you will solicit for it in your neighbourhood. I despair of finding any of that sort of zeal among us, which will carry any of our clergy to such distant places, where they are exposed to so many hardships: the business of party takes up all our zeal, and we are at our wits end if any great men are employed that we don't like."—*European Magazine*, vol. xvi., p. 167.

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he adds, "that ſome miſſionaries alſo, of our own, ſhould be provided to go out among the infidels, where we have any ſettlement among them;" and that what the Daniſh miſſionaries have already effected "would excite a ſpirit of zeal and emulation in our univerſities, and eſpecially in the younger ſtudents of divinity, to offer themſelves to be ſent forth on this glorious undertaking." With alluſion apparently to Sir Leoline Jenkins' foundation at Jeſus' College, Oxford, he ſuggeſts, that fellowſhips "might be aſſigned for the encouragement of ſuch as ſhould preſent themſelves to be employed in an apoſtolical miſſion to any part of the world, more particularly to the Eaſt Indies;" and that "ſome eccleſiaſtical dignities or benefices might be appointed for a reward for ſuch miſſionaries of the Goſpel, or chaplains to our factories among infidels, as ſhall be found at their return to have laboured faithfully for ſuch a certain term of years in the converſion of the unbelievers to the Truth, and to have fully diſcharged the high truſt committed to them by God."*

6. *The Deſigns of Dr. Bray.*

The religious and charitable deſigns of Dr. Thomas Bray were not altogether merged in the operations of the two great ſocieties which were founded at his inſtance. He ſtill carried on his plans for parochial and other libraries, with the advice and aſſiſtance of a body of aſſociated truſtees, who ſurvive to the preſent day as a ſeparate inſtitution, under the title of "the Aſſociates of Dr. Bray," and the ſhare which Nelſon took in its management muſt give it a place here among his "Ways and Methods of doing Good."

It was upon his appointment as Commiſſary to Maryland in 1695, that Dr. Bray† firſt expreſſed his ſenſe of the

* "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate," pp. 117, 130, seqq.

† See "Public Spirit illuſtrated in the Life and Deſigns of the Rev. Thos.

neceſſity of providing libraries for the uſe of the poorer clergy, in the following propoſal:

"That, ſince none but the poorer ſort of clergy, who could not ſufficiently ſupply themſelves with books, could be perſuaded to leave their friends and change their country for one ſo remote; and that without a competent proviſion of books, they could not anſwer the ends of their miſſion; if their lordſhips the biſhops thought fit to aſſiſt him in providing parochial libraries for the miniſters that ſhould be ſent, he would be content to accept the Commiſſary's office in Maryland."

While ſoliciting in England ſubſcriptions for the libraries abroad, he found himſelf not unfrequently met by the objection, that we had poor cures and poor clergymen enough in England, who ſtood in need of a ſimilar proviſion, and he was thus induced to enlarge his plan and addreſs himſelf to the formation of parochial libraries alſo at home. In 1703, he drew public attention to the ſubject in an eſſay, ſhowing the incompetent proviſion in many pariſhes for enabling the clergy to inſtruct the people; and in 1709, he obtained an Act of Parliament for inſuring the better preſervation of ſuch parochial libraries as he might eſtabliſh for their uſe. He devoted himſelf with indefatigable zeal to this object to the cloſe of a long life, and never loſt an opportunity of advancing its claims. A detention at Plymouth, when waiting for a paſſage to Maryland, was the occaſion of recovering a neglected library in that town, and of founding others at Graveſend and Deal, as ſeaport libraries for naval chaplains and miſſionaries bound for their poſts in the plantations. In his living at Aldgate, he ſuperintended the ſtudies of young miſſionaries who were

Bray, D.D., formerly miniſter of St. Botolph without Aldgate, London, to which are added the Deſigns and Proceedings of thoſe who now form the Society which he inſtituted." The 2nd edition reviſed. 1808.

about to proceed to the colonies, and he eſtabliſhed a probationary library upon the ſpot for their uſe. The wants of the laity were not forgotten by him, and in his "Primordia Bibliothecaria," he has left a ſcheme for parochial lending libraries of greater or leſs extent, and varying in coſt from two or three to one hundred pounds. And ſo ſucceſsful were his different exertions, that he had the ſatiſfaction of eſtabliſhing before his death (1730) no leſs than ſixty-ſeven parochial libraries for the uſe of the miniſter of the place, and eighty-three lending catechetical libraries in central localities for loan among the neighbouring clergy. In addition to theſe, more than fifty libraries were ſent out by him into North America, the Weſt Indies, to a factory in Bengal, and to Cape Corſo Caſtle, on the African coaſt.

In carrying out theſe deſigns Dr. Bray was ſupported (among others) by "the charitable Earl of Thanet," as Dunton calls him, by Lords Weymouth and Digby, Dr. Smalridge, Dr. Bull (whoſe ſubſcription of 20*l.* may be owing to the ſolicitation of his former pupil), Mr. Hoare, and Robert Nelſon, who aſſiſted in drawing up ſome rules for the better preſervation of the libraries. The loſs of the early journals* of the Society deprives us of full details of Nelſon's perſonal ſhare in its operations. The intereſt which he took in his friend's deſigns is indicated by ſome early minutes of the Society for promoting Chriſtian Knowledge; as when he "reports that he has procured thirty volumes of Biſhop Sanderſon's ſermons for the uſe of the libraries projected by Dr. Bray in the plantations," or appears upon a committee for eſtabliſhing lending libraries in Wales, or is "deſired to buy books for the two libraries in the dioceſes of St. Aſaph and Llandaff," or is ſtated to

* They appear to have been ſeen by Mr. H. J. Todd, when he publiſhed his edition of the "Life and Deſigns of Dr. Bray" in 1808. See Preface, p. viii. note. But they are not now to be found in the muniment cheſt of the Aſſociates.

have ordered the works of Petavius for their uſe. In his "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate," he eſpecially recommends to their charitable conſideration "the erecting parochial libraries in the meanly-endowed cures throughout England;" ſtating* that there were then in England above 2000 pariſhes where the annual income of the miniſters did not exceed 30*l.*, and urging that "the miniſters who officiate in churches ſo meanly endowed, muſt of neceſſity be unfurniſhed with ſuch books as might enable them to adminiſter wholeſome and ſound doctrine to their flock, either by way of catechiſing or of preaching." He deſcribes the formation of this Society for ſupplying the defect, and for eſtabliſhing parochial libraries to be attached to ſuch cures, for the uſe of the miniſter for the time being, and "conſiſting each of a competent number of the beſt comments on the Holy Scriptures, and the moſt approved treatiſes of practical divinity." And he concludes:†

"Through the bleſſing of God, and the munificence of ſeveral worthy benefactors, this undertaking hath ſo far proſper'd, that the truſtees have already procured near 3000 books in folio, and above 4000 in 4to, and 8vo; which are lodged in repoſitories for that purpoſe provided.

"It is propoſed by the truſtees, that if this deſign meets with due encouragement, there ſhall be at leaſt five hundred libraries erected, whereof above fifty are already completed, and ſent into ſeveral parts of the kingdom: and they do not doubt but that all good men will join with them in their hearty wiſhes and endeavours, that in proceſs of time, none of the above-mentioned 2000 cures ſhall want the ſame advantage.

"There is in like manner a deſign for erecting ſome libraries in the Highlands of North-Britain, for the uſe chiefly of the miniſters and candidates; ſeveral of whom are ſaid to be perſons of excellent parts and capacities, but to

* pp. 169, ſeqq. † Ibid, pp. 171-4.

be almoſt wholly deſtitute of books, and unprovided with the neceſſary means of improving themſelves. And it is propoſed to have one library in each county of the Highlands; the number of which may be afterwards increaſed, as encouragement ſhall be given. And there is a deſign carrying on for Wales, much of the ſame nature."

7. *The Commiſſion for Building New Churches.*

The public erection of additional churches in London, which had been contemplated by Sancroft, and ineffectually propoſed by the prelates of the Revolution, was more immediately owing to the impulſe of High-church enthuſiaſm in Queen Anne's reign. The Tory Houſe of Commons, in 1710, took the initiative* in this great religious work, and upon referring to Committee a petition for church accommodation from Greenwich, made it an inſtruction to the Committee to "conſider what churches are wanting within the cities of London and Weſtminſter, and the ſuburbs thereof." Upon this encouragement, petitions for new churches poured in from the different parts of the metropolis, from Tilbury, Malden, Kingston, and Graveſend. The Lower Houſe of Convocation haſtened to expreſs their pleaſure at finding their intentions anticipated by the zeal of the Commons, and returned their "unanimous thanks for ſuch an inſtance of affectionate regard to the welfare of the Eſtabliſhed Church, and the common intereſts of religion," offering to aſſiſt the deliberations of Parliament "by imparting ſuch lights as they were able." The Commons reſponded to their offer by the reſpectful reſolution, "That this Houſe will, in all matters immediately relating to religion and the welfare of

* See an account of this churchbuilding movement in the Rev. R. Yates' "The Church in Danger," 1815, and his "Baſis of National Welfare," 1817, where are copious extracts from the parliamentary papers of the time to which he had acceſs.

the Eſtabliſhed Church, have a particular regard to ſuch applications as ſhall at any time be made to them from the clergy in Convocation aſſembled, according to the ancient uſage, together with the Parliament." No time was loſt in preparing an exact ſtatement of the deficiency to be ſupplied, and on the 10th of March, Convocation preſented to Parliament a report, ſpecifying twenty-ſeven * of the largeſt pariſhes in London (with a population of 512,954, and but twenty-eight churches and eighteen tabernacles or chapels of eaſe), as requiring additional church accommodation. On the 6th of the following month, the Commons' Committee reported upon the accuracy of the calculation; and allowing for as much as one-fifth of the above population to conſiſt of French Proteſtants and Diſſenters (who were accommodated in meeting-houſes of their own), they concluded that a church population of 240,500 remained unprovided for; for whom fifty new churches (the Houſe reſolved) were required, computing 4750 ſouls to each church and pariſh. For the erection of theſe churches, and for the proviſion of parſonage-houſes and burial-grounds, a ſupply was voted of 350,000*l.*; a bill paſſed through both Houſes *(nemine contradicente)* for raiſing the amount by a tax of 2*s.* or 3*s.* a-ton upon all coals brought into the port of London; a Royal Commiſſion was appointed (Sept. 21) for carrying

* The Pariſhes ſpecified were St. Andrew's Holborn, St. Ann Weſtminſter, St. Botolph Aldgate, St. Botolph Biſhopgate, St. Botolph Alderſgate, St. Clement's-Danes, Chriſt Church Surrey, St. Giles' Cripplegate, St. James' Clerkenwell, St. Sepulchre's, St. Giles' in the Fields, St. Martin's in the Fields, St. Mary Magdalen Bermondſey, St. Paul Shadwell, St. John Wapping, St. James' Weſtminſter, St. Leonard's Shoreditch, St. Margaret Weſtminſter, St. Paul Covent Garden, St. George Southwark, St. Olave Southwark, St. Saviour's Southwark, St. Mary Whitechapel, Poplar, Blackwall, Rotherhithe, Deptford; with ſeven hamlets in Stepney, viz., Ratcliffe, Limehouſe, Mile End Old Town and New Town, Wapping, Spitalfields and Bethnal Green. It will be obſerved that the names of St. Pancras and Marylebone, whoſe religious deficiencies are of later growth, do not here occur at all; while the ſpiritual deſtitution of the Eaſt end of town ſeems to have attracted as much notice as at preſent.

out the purpoſe of the Act, and powers given them to divide pariſhes, to ſelect and purchaſe ſites, to form conſolidated diſtricts, to determine what churches ſhould be built, and what chapels ſhould be converted into pariſh churches.

In the liſt of Commiſſioners we find the name of Robert Nelſon, and his fellow-labourers in all works of charity, the Lords Thanet and Weymouth, Stanhope, Gaſtrell and Smalridge, Henry Hoare, and Edward Jennings. The inſertion of an avowed nonjuror's name in a Royal Commiſſion is a noticeable tribute to the public character which he now poſſeſſed as a promoter of church extenſion in every ſhape. To the want of Church accommodation in our large towns his attention had already been called by his friend Hickes, who calculated that above 100 new churches, and as many pariſh prieſts, were required within the Bills of Mortality, and ſuggeſted, as early as 1705, that the Coal Act of Charles the Second's reign, which was then expiring, might be continued for the purpoſe.*

The neighbourhood in which Nelſon himſelf reſided afforded an inſtance of new buildings and an increaſed population outſtripping the accommodation of the pariſh church (that of St. Andrew's, Holborn); and the knights, baronets, and honourable gentlemen who inhabited the newly-erected manſions of Ormond Street and Queen Square, had built a chapel for their own uſe in 1705. Robert Nelſon was from the firſt (even when a nonjuror) on the Committee of Pewholders in the building, and it was at a meeting of which he was Chairman (Feb. 13, 1712) that an application was made to the new Commiſſioners for the aſſignment of a parochial diſtrict, which he ſaw effected in the following year.† The lively intereſt he took in the national effort for church extenſion which was now

* Preface to "Firſt Collection of Controverſial Letters." 1705. p. 26.

† The chapel, however, was not conſecrated and erected into the pariſh church of St. George the Martyr, Queen Square, till Sept. 26, 1723.

being ſo nobly ſchemed, was further evinced by an account of the Commiſſion which he contributed to his friend Chamberlayn's "Preſent State of Great Britain," and by the foremoſt place he gives to it among his "ways and methods of doing good."* He there laments over the many "pariſhes where the number of pariſhioners exceeds ten times the capacity of the church to receive them, and where, conſequently, there are many that totally neglect the public worſhip of God, and are thereby deprived of the means of grace, the feeding of their minds with neceſſary knowledge, the joining in thoſe united prayers which are offered up by a commiſſioned officer, and the communicating in the Holy Sacrament of Chriſt's body and blood. While others, whoſe minds are more ſerious, but not grounded in any true principles which fix them to the communion of the Church of England, take up with the next meeting-houſe where they can be accommodated with room, and are unawares betrayed into the hands of teachers who are deſtitute of that authority which the Church of England requires in her paſtors." He rejoices over the zeal with which meaſures were taken againſt the evil. "How this was brought about, even at a time when the nation was involved in a moſt expenſive war, and with what ſurpriſing facility it was carried through the Parliament, doth indeed well deſerve to be remembered, to the honour of the principal managers and movers in it." He ſuggeſts that ground-landlords might be compelled, when they build a certain number of houſes, to erect a church to contain the new inhabitants. He points out that this lack of church accommodation is not confined to great towns alone, but that "the churches of many pariſhes throughout this kingdom, as alſo in Ireland, are at this time in a very poor and ruinous condition; and in ſome places many inhabitants

* "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate," pp. 105, et ſeqq.

are obliged to go ſeveral miles to enjoy the benefit of public worſhip." He wiſhes that my lords the biſhops would make an exact ſurvey, and give in a liſt to Parliament what churches or chapels are wanted, or what are proper to be rebuilt or repaired within their dioceſes," with a view to a public proviſion for the ſame.

"But till this Chriſtian ſpirit," he continues, "farther diffuſes itſelf into the legiſlative power, it is plain that a man of quality hath ſufficient means ready at hand to accompliſh it; and it will be very proper for him to chooſe ſuch great towns for the erecting of conſecrated places as are in the neighbourhood of his large dominions; ſo that the bountiful donor of what he enjoys may be conſtantly adored there, from whence his ſupplies proceed. And this is the firſt method which I ſhall offer of doing good to the ſouls of men."

At every line in the above the unavailing regret riſes in the Engliſh Churchman's mind, that a want ſo ſenſibly felt in Nelſon's day ſhould have been then ſo inadequately ſupplied, that the words of advice which he left as a legacy behind him ſhould have fallen with ſo little effect upon the ears of the worldly generation which ſucceeded, that the munificent grant of the legiſlature* ſhould have been waſted by the extravagance of architects and the ſupineneſs

* Out of the 49 new churches to be erected and the three chapels to be converted into churches, as finally decided on, the following only were completed; viz., Greenwich; Deptford; St. Mary-le-Strand; St. John Evangeliſt, Weſtminſter; St. George, Ratcliffe Highway; Chriſt Church, Spittlefields; St. Ann's, Limehouſe, in the pariſh of Stepney; St. John's, Horſeleydown; St. Luke, Old Street; St. George's, Queen Square; St. George's, Bloomſbury; and St. George's Hanover Square. St. Giles and St. Martin's-in-the-Fields were rebuilt in lieu of the erection of additional churches in thoſe pariſhes; St. Mary Woolnoth, in conſideration of its having been imperfectly reſtored after the Great Fire. Of theſe churches, a Parliamentary Committee reported (Nov. 19, 1718) that St. John's, Weſtminſter, coſt £29,277, that at Deptford £19,367, Limehouſe, £19,679, Spittlefields, £19,418, Ratcliffe Highway, £18,557, Greenwich, £18,269, St. Mary-le-Strand, £16,341. The two firſt, the Committee juſtly complained, were erected by Mr. Archer, the architect, and one of the Commiſſioners, without any eſtimate.

of the Commiſſioners to whom it was intruſted; and that, in fine, only one-fifth of the fifty churches ſhould have been eventually erected, and an acknowledged evil thus allowed to perpetuate and increaſe, to an extent which no ſubſequent public grant or voluntary effort has ſince been able to retrieve.

Nelſon was ſpared the mortification of mourning over the unworthy iſſue of the noble ſcheme from which he had hoped ſo much. He did not ſurvive to ſee ſo much as the firſt ſtone laid of the contemplated churches. But the good work engaged his thoughts to the laſt, and one of his lateſt labours was to read over a Treatiſe* on Church Building, which had been forwarded to him for his approval by one of his many admirers, and which he returned encloſed with an aſſurance of "the pleaſure and ſatisfaction" it had given him.

8. *Desideranda.*

To our account of the different charitable labours in which Robert Nelſon was actively engaged, muſt be added his own ſketch of the further charitable ſchemes which he was only able to indicate and recommend. The enumeration of them exhibits to advantage the keen and thoughtful appreciation which he had of the ſocial wants of our country and the deficiences of our Church :†—

"We have not," he urges, "a hoſpital for the incurable, as they have in ſome parts abroad; and ſo ſeveral miſerable

*"The Rich man's great and indiſpenſable Duty to contribute liberally to the building, rebuilding, repairing, beautifying, and adorning of churches, largely ſet forth and laid before the Nobility, Gentry, and all other rich perſons of whatſoever rank or denomination. Being a diſcourſe peruſed and approved of by the late moſt pious Robert Nelſon, Eſq., as what might be of great uſe to the public." By Edward Wells, D.D., Rector of Coteſbach, in Leiceſterſhire. 1715.

† "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate," pp. 210, et seqq.

objects, left without all help, and even hope, may periſh before their time; ſeveral of whom poſſibly might be recovered, and uſeful experiments made upon them in medicine, to the great advancement of that faculty. There might be alſo hoſpitals for every capital diſtemper of the body, which would certainly tend exceedingly to promote the ſame end, in like manner as that of Bethlehem is for lunacy and diſeaſes of the brain; there might be an hoſpital for the blind and for all diſeaſes of the eyes, another for the ſtone, a third for gout and rheumatiſm, a fourth for the dropſy, a fifth for the aſthma, a ſixth for the conſumption, a ſeventh for the palſy, and ſome other nervous caſes. By which means there might be mighty improvements made in the art of curing, and, with God's bleſſing, many thouſands of lives might he preſerved for the good of the publick.

"We have not a houſe of charity to receive poor expoſed infants, whereby many murders and abortions might be prevented, and even the children of honeſt poor parents, who are not able to provide for them, might be taken care of, both as to ſoul and body.

"We have not a houſe to receive ſuch young women as may be convinced of their folly, and converted from a looſe courſe of life, into which they may have been by ſurpriſe at firſt betrayed; and would be glad to have, if they could, a convenience of retirement from temptation, whereby to ſecure their future eſtate, and poſſeſs here their own ſoul out of the noiſe and ſcandal of the world, by a true Chriſtian diſcipline; not being wanting, at the ſame time, to make the neceſſary proviſion for their bodies by the labour of their hands; that ſo they may not be burdenſome to the houſe, but rather helpful.

"We have not houſes to receive decayed gentlemen, or thoſe who have but ſmall fortunes, or any who have a mind to retreat for a certain time, where they may have all the advantages of a religious and uſeful ſociety, without binding themſelves to any obligations, which they may afterwards grow weary of.

"We have not houſes for the reception of ladies and gentlewomen, beyond boarding ſchools, in order to their improvement both in knowledge and piety; though there

was ſome years ago a propoſal to ladies* for this end, made by a very ingenious gentlewoman, which was then well approved of by ſeveral ladies and others.

"We have no colleges or houſes of hoſpitality for entertaining ſtrangers, which might be made of very great uſe to the publick.

"We have not colleges for receiving new converts from popery, whom we ought not either preſently to truſt, nor totally to reject. Now, if there were a college for probationers, in one part of which converts from popery, and in the other converts from ſchiſm, were to be firſt tried and exerciſed for a certain time before they were admitted and approved, this might be very much both for the honour and the ſecurity of the Church of England.

"We have neither ſchool nor hoſpital for the diſtreſſed children called the blackguard.† Many alſo of the pariſh children are vagrants, and expoſed to a multitude of temptations, by not being kept together in one houſe, which

* "A Serious Propoſal to the Ladies for the Advancement of their True and Greateſt Intereſt. By a Lover of her Sex [Mrs. Aſtell], 1697." See "Ballard's Lives," p. 446.

† The following "Propoſal for a Charity School for Blackguard Boys," ſhows how completely Robert Nelſon anticipated the ragged schools of our own days, and it raiſes a ſigh, that a good work, ſketched ſo long ago by one of the Church's ſons, ſhould have been allowed, by her negligenee, to have fallen into other hands:

"*A Propoſal for a Charity-ſchool for the Blackguard Boys.*

"Whereas the Charity Schools erected in the ſeveral parts of this kingdom have abundantly improved the morals of poor children educated in them to the honour of God and the benefit of the nation. And whereas the children commonly called blackguard boys, are deſtitute of all manner of proviſion for inſtruction, tending either to the good of their ſouls or bodies, ſo that they are not only a ſcandal to the country they live in, but a diſgrace to human nature. And whereas a ſchool might be formed under ſuch regulations as would make them more uſeful in their little ſtations as well as leſs wicked and profane.

"We whoſe names are underwritten, do hereby agree to pay towards ſetting up of a Charity School in ſuch place as ſhall be thought moſt proper for teaching the blackguard boys to read, and inſtructing them in the knowledge and practice of the Chriſtian religion, as profeſſed and taught in the Church of England, and ſuch other things as are ſuitable to their condition and capacity."

An eſtimate follows of the charge of ſupporting a "Charity School for blackguard boys," who were to be clothed as well as taught; and "if the ſubſcriptions will amount to ſo much, a half-penny loaf of bread may be allowed to each boy at noon that comes to ſchool ſeaſonably in the morning."

could be done at much leſs charge to the pariſh as well as much greater advantage to the poor children.

"There is a want of ſuffragan biſhops, both at home and in the weſtern plantations. The Dioceſe of Wincheſter may have three of thoſe ſuffragans, and Lincoln four, according to an Act of Parliament ſtill in force. There are two-and-twenty ſuffragan biſhops who by that law might be made in England. And four ſuffragans, at leaſt, ſhould be in America."

Of the different ſchemes of uſefulneſs here ſuggeſted, there is hardly one, the worth and importance of which has not been confirmed by ſubſequent experience, or the need of which is not ſenſibly felt by ourſelves. Thus, again, there are few religious wants of our Church more generally recogniſed than the need of more deeply religious training for our clergy, and the neceſſity of theological colleges for our candidates for holy orders, and it is thus that Robert Nelſon touches upon the deficiency * in 1714 :—

"If the palaces of biſhops might become again, as heretofore, the ſchools of candidates for the holy miniſtry, how then would religion in general, and our Church in particular, flouriſh? Some attempts of this nature have been made of late years, but for want of ſufficient encouragement, as well as of due regulations for carrying it on, this neceſſary undertaking hath not hitherto met with all that ſucceſs which could be wiſhed for. However, a ſmall ſeminary of this kind hath within theſe few years been ſet up in the Iſle of Man, under the direction of the good biſhop thereof; who made alſo a propoſal ſome time ſince to the Society for Propagating the Goſpel in Foreign Parts to educate or prepare four miſſionaries in his ſeminary at a very low rate, to be at the command and direction of the ſaid ſociety. And as thoſe ſhould have have been educated under the eye of the biſhop, who muſt thence be acquainted with their true character, probably ſuch only would be pre-

* "Addreſs," pp. 123, et seqq.

ſented to that moſt important ſervice whoſe qualifications were before ſufficiently tried and approved, and ſuch as might be an honour to their holy profeſſion and the miſſion they are deſigned for, as faithful and true labourers in that vineyard which falleth to their lot.

"There are ſome wiſe and good men of opinion that they who are ſent out to ſuch a miſſion in our plantations abroad ſhould be obliged to ſtudy and practiſe phyſick and chirurgery, that they may have the better opportunity of doing good to men's ſouls whilſt they are taking care of their bodies. The biſhop's propoſal did not extend ſo far; but this hath been taken up by others, and much recommended for its apparent uſefulneſs to all mankind.

"But not only for the miſſionaries, who are called to propagate the Goſpel among infidels abroad, but for all other candidates of divinity, it hath been much wiſhed that there were ſome proper ſeminaries, where, after an academical education firſt laid in one or other of our univerſities, they might not only be fully inſtructed in the art of preaching, but in all other parts of their duty; and more eſpecially how to perform all the public offices with a becoming gravity and devotion. We have indeed very noble foundations for the encouragement of theological ſtudies; but there ſeems to be ſomewhat further yet required, beyond the common method which is taken in the colleges.

"And nothing would be likely to give a greater increaſe to our holy religion than the foundation of ſuch apoſtolical ſeminaries in every dioceſe, under the immediate direction of the biſhop thereof."*

* In the Life of Biſhop Bull, he expreſſes in ſtill ſtronger terms his ſenſe of the need of ſuch theological colleges, where "candidates for orders might be fully inſtructed in all that knowledge which that holy inſtitution requires, and in all thoſe duties which are peculiarly incumbent upon a parochial prieſt. Where lectures might be daily read, which in a certain courſe of time ſhould include a perfect ſcheme of divinity; where all particular caſes of conſcience might be clearly ſtated, and ſuch general rules laid down as might be able to aſſiſt them in giving ſatisfaction to all thoſe that repair to them for advice in difficult matters. Where they might receive right notions of all thoſe ſpiritual rights which are appropriated to the prieſthood, and which are not in the power of the greateſt ſecular perſon either to convey or aboliſh; and yet are of ſuch great importance, that ſome of them are not only neceſſary to the well-being, but to the very being of the church. Where they might be taught to

These extracts are taken from "A Repreſentation of the Several Ways and Methods of Doing Good," which Nelſon has incorporated into his "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate;" a poſthumous work, which appeared in 1715,* under the editorſhip of his friend Lee, into whoſe hands, ſhortly before his laſt illneſs, he had entruſted the manuſcript for publication.

In this work Nelſon endeavoured to enliſt the ſympathies of the rich and noble, with whom he was in the habit of aſſociating, in behalf of thoſe children of poverty for whom he lived. He urged upon them that ſomething different was required from them than mere liberality; that liberality conſiſts in giving what is their own when they have no obligation to give, and nothing to expect from it; but that charity is a reſtoring of that proportion of your wealth which does not belong to you, which you are obliged by the commandment of God to diſtribute to the neceſſities of others. Do you in earneſt believe, he aſks, that the Almighty, in heaping ſuch treaſure upon you, aimed at

perſorm all the public offices of religion with a becoming gravity and devotion, and with all that advantage of elocution which is apteſt to ſecure attention and beget devout affection in the congregation. Where they might particularly be directed how to receive clinical confeſſions, how to make their applications to perſons in times of ſickneſs, and have ſuch a method formed to guide their addreſſes of that nature, that they might never be at a loſs when they are called upon to aſſiſt ſick and dying perſons. Where they might be inſtructed in the art of preaching; whereby I mean not only the beſt method in compoſing their ſermons, but all thoſe decent geſtures and graceful deportment, the influence whereof all hearers can eaſier feel than expreſs. And where they might have ſuch judicious rules given them for proſecuting their theological ſtudies as would be of great uſe to them in their future conduct. But above all, where they might be formed by conſtant practice and by the example of their ſuperiors, to piety and devotion, to humility and charity, to mortification and ſelf-denial, to contentedneſs and ſubmiſſion to the will of God in all conditions of human life; and more eſpecially excited to great zeal in promoting the ſalvation of ſouls, which is the true ſpring of all that induſtry and application which is required in the clerical function."

* "An Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate, by Robert Nelſon, Eſq., to which is added an appendix of ſome original and valuable papers. 1715." It was reprinted at Dublin, with ſuitable adaptations to the locality, in 1752.

nothing but to make you rich and great? He meant the rich to be fathers to the poor, and the poor to look up to them as to parents. He means the fortunes of the rich to be reſervoirs of charity, from which perpetual ſtreams of kindneſs ſhould iſſue on all around. They are as much meant to give as the clouds to rain, or the ſun to ſhine. God has lodged the portion of the poor in the hands of the rich; and, if you conſume all you have upon yourſelves, you are guilty both of diſobedience and of injuſtice. You uſe your wealth contrary to the intention of God, who is the abſolute maſter of it, and has intruſted you to diſpenſe it; you uſe it contrary to the right of the poor, who have a juſt title to a ſhare of thoſe good things which you poſſeſs.

"All the ancient Fathers," he continues, "who are wiſe inſtructors in matters of piety, as well as the beſt witneſſes to neceſſary truth, agree in this notion; that after we have ſatisfy'd our neceſſities, and ſupply'd our reaſonable occaſions, we ſhould employ the reſt for the relief of our poor neighbours. And there is no point whereupon they have ſo often and clearly explained themſelves. Not to beſtow our ſuperfluities upon the poor, St. Auguſtin aſſerts, is a manifeſt retaining the goods of our neighbour. St. Baſil ſays, that we commit as many robberies, as we refuſe occaſions of relieving the neceſſitous from our ſuperfluities. Do you know what crime you render yourſelves guilty of, you that are rich, when you deny the poor neceſſary food? The ſame crime, ſays St. Ambroſe, as if you ſnatched out of his hands the little bread he hath wherewith to ſupport his life. All the fathers ſay ſo exactly the ſame thing, that there is but little difference in their manner of expreſſing it. So that it is the hungry man's bread you lock up in your own cheſts; it is his food you conſume in riot and gluttony; it is the naked man's clothing you wear in the extravagances of your apparel; and it is the priſoner's liberty that you throw away at your exceſſive gaming and deep play."

On the other hand he aſſures them, that "if doing good were attended with no other advantage than the pleaſure that reſults from ſuch actions, ſurely that is ſufficient to make you in love with it. What a pleaſure is there," he exclaims, with a warmth that was evidently kindled by a remembrance of the happy moments he had thus himſelf received:

"What a pleaſure is there, to enter into a family as an angel of peace, and to leave thoſe in acts of praiſe and thankfulneſs, whom we found plunged in mourning and deſolation? What pleaſure to go about ſowing joy in the minds of men, ſtrewing everywhere quiet and ſerenity, changing the conditions of men, making happy ones, and working miracles? Is it poſſible that there ſhould be any ſo fooliſh as to chooſe rather to ſee their coffers full of dirt and earth, than to be fathers of the poor, inſtruments of Providence, viſible gods, as it were, of this world, loved, bleſſed, and almoſt adored, by men?"

And he ſets before them the eternal rewards which will follow upon this preſent pleaſure, and the opportunities which the rich and great poſſeſs of procuring the moſt exalted places in heaven by devoting themſelves here to a life of beneficence and religion.

"If there are crowns," he ſays, "for an obſcure and deſpiſed humility; for the contempt of the world in a mean condition; for that juſtice, which hath been joined with an incapacity of doing much miſchief; for that meekneſs, which hath been deprived of the ſureſt means of reſentment; for that innocence, which hath always been kept at a diſtance from temptations: what thrones are there not prepared for thoſe heroick vertues, which have increaſed in the midſt of the moſt corrupted courts? What exaltation ſhall not that humility receive, that hath continually grown under honour and preferment? What a glorious kingdom ſhall not that poverty of ſpirit be poſſeſſed of, which hath

been able to preſerve itſelf under great plenty and abundance? What comfort ſhall not be adminiſtered to them, who have been mourners, when the joys and delights of the world have been always at their command; who have abſtained from pleaſures when all ſorts of pleaſure ſeemed to court them? What a bleſſed viſion ſhall not the pure in heart be eternally entertained with, who have preſerved their chaſtity inviolable in the midſt of an infectious air? What durable riches ſhall not be conferred upon thoſe who have diſperſed and given to the poor, when it was in their power to have conſumed it in luxury and magnificence?

"Bleſſed are you rich, who ſhall be found without blemiſh, who have not gone after gold. Happy, infinitely happy will you be, who have always put your truſt and confidence in the Lord: whoſe hearts have not been corrupted by your great treaſures; whoſe minds have not become vain and fooliſh from your birth and titles; who have led a virtuous and pious life in the midſt of a wicked and depraved world: who, having in your power an abſolute liberty to do every thing, have always kept yourſelves within the narrow bounds of God's laws; and when you might have done what you would, did nothing but what you ought; who, having it in your power to do evil, exerciſed yourſelves only in good works."

CHAPTER IV.

ROBERT NELSON'S DEVOTIONAL WRITINGS.

(1). The Practice of True Devotion, 1698.—Quotations.—(2). Exhortation to Houſekeepers, 1702.—Extract.—(3). Companion to the Feſtivals and Faſts, 1704.—Similar works by previous and ſubſequent writers.—Its extraordinary popularity. Prized by Bonwicke and others.—Abſtract of Subjects.—Quotations.—Obſervance of Holydays in Nelſon's time.—(4). The Chriſtian Sacrifice, 1706.—Nelſon's opinion of Frequent Communion.—Practice of Bonnell and others.—Celebrations at the London Churches.—Nelſon's doctrine of the Euchariſtic Sacrifice, taught by Lake, Ken, Bull, Beveridge, and others.—Attacked by Trimnell and others.—(5) Inſtructions for Confirmation.

To the preceding enumeration of thoſe "ways and methods of doing good," to which Robert Nelſon devoted his life, and by which he endeared himſelf to his contemporaries, his biographer muſt add a ſpecial and ſeparate notice of thoſe devotional writings which have made his name a houſehold word to many, whom the record of his perſonal charities has never reached, and by which he ſtill continues to be doing good, and ſowing the ſeeds of true devotion and ſound doctrine in our Church.

1. The earlieſt of theſe devotional works was his "Practice of True Devotion,"* which was publiſhed anonymouſly in 1698. In conſequence, poſſibly, of thus wanting the advantage of his name, it failed to attract popular attention as quickly as his other publications, and did not reach a ſecond edition till the year after his death, in 1715, when

* "The Practice of True Devotion in relation to the end as well as to the means of Religion; with an office for the Holy Communion." Nichols' "Lit. Anecd.," vol. iv. p. 193, and "Anecdotes of Bowyer," p. 3, gives 1698 as the date of the firſt edition. The Preface has a later date (Aug. 23, 1708), and muſt have been ſubſequently added.

it began to take its place in public eſteem, being reprinted as often as twenty times by the commencement of the preſent century. It is full as worthy of its author as any of his later writings; and indeed the very nature of its object, together with the earneſtneſs, kindlineſs, and good ſenſe with which that ſubject is treated, render it a ſtill truer embodiment than they are of his own perſonal character in religion. The Preface is characteriſtic of one who took ſhelter from the violence of party ſtrife in the practice of piety and charity.

"The preſent divided ſtate of Chriſtianity is ſo melancholy a conſideration to all pious and good men, who thoroughly apprehend the dreadful conſequences of it, that they do not more frequently lament, than they do moſt fervently beg of God a ſovereign remedy for thoſe unhappy diviſions that prevail in the world; and labour as earneſtly in their ſeveral ſtations to ſuggeſt ſuch methods as may prove moſt effectual to preſerve the unity of the faith, and may have the greateſt tendency to reconcile the minds of men to one another.

"It is but too manifeſt, that among the many viſible ill effects of parties, we may reaſonably reckon, as a very conſiderable one, the great decay of the ſpirit and life of devotion; for while men are ſo deeply concerned for their ſeveral ſchemes, and purſue them with the vigour of their minds, and the bent of their affections, the ſolid and ſubſtantial part of religion is apt to evaporate; and charity, the very bond of peace, and of all virtues, without which whoſoever liveth is counted dead before God, is but too frequently made a ſacrifice to thoſe differences that divide us."

It was to put ſome check upon what he felt to be a growing evil of the day, that Nelſon drew up this invaluable manual of practical religion. He commences, like William Law in his "Serious Call," by ſtating the nature of true devotion. He owns that "in diſcourſe we

generally underſtand by a devout man, one who prays often with all the appearances of a ſerious and religious mind; and the frequent exerciſe of the means of grace, eſpecially prayer, ſeems to have engroſſed the character of devotion." But he inſiſts that true devotion is not ſo much the performance of any one duty, "as it is the way and manner of performing all the inſtances of our duty; that it conſiſts in a conſtant and ready cheerfulneſs of mind in doing the will of God, however manifeſted to us: for this ſhows we are devoted to his ſervice. It is an earneſtneſs of ſoul to be entirely conformed in everything to the divine pleaſure; ſo that the covetous do not more eagerly long for wealth, the ambitious for honour, and the epicure for pleaſure, than the devout ſoul does to live in all the commandments of the Lord blameleſs." He proceeds to offer rules for the attainment and preſervation of this religious ſpirit. It is within the reach of all. Chriſtian perfection, he urges, is not to be attained only by retirement and contemplation, and by abſtracting ourſelves from the world. It conſiſts in the right performance of ſuch actions as occur every day. Even the public functions of the miniſtry give no advantage in this reſpect to those who are occupied by them.

"The difference between the goodneſs of one man and another, does not ſo much depend upon the nature of that employment which is made his profeſſion, as upon that temper of mind with which he governs it. The prieſt at the altar may be rejected by God through his ambition and covetouſneſs; when the tradeſman in his ſhop may ſanctify his buſineſs by juſtice and charity."

The practices of piety are to be valued only as they are calculated to produce this inward devotion of heart, "ſo that it is not he that ſays the moſt prayers, and comes the moſt frequently to the Altar, that is the moſt holy and

ſanctified perſon; but he that is moſt like to God, and abounds moſt with the fruits of the ſpirit."

Obedience to the commandments of God is true devotion to his ſervice, and "thus praying always, and praying without ceaſing, is by ſome underſtood to conſiſt in governing all our actions by the rule of our duty, keeping our minds always in a fit diſpoſition to pray. And when the ſun and moon, the light and ſtars are called upon to praiſe the Lord, it is by obſerving their regular courſe and conſtantly performing thoſe offices that were laid upon them in the beginning of the creation. In like manner, whoever diſcharges well the duties of his ſtation, and exactly performs the obligations of his profeſſion, may be ſaid to pray continually, and praiſe the Lord."

Thus under the Practice of True Devotion, Nelſon is able to include the duties of ordinary life, as well as the outward obſervances of religion, and his book continues to this day as complete and uſeful a manual of practical religion as any which our Church poſſeſſes, and as ſuitable a guide for well-diſpoſed and well-inſtructed youth as could be put into their hands. The following quotations may ſerve as further ſpecimens of Nelſon's ſtyle and matter in this his earlieſt devotional work; they will evince his thoughtful ſtudy of human nature, and juſtify the reputation which this book has ſo long enjoyed.

Little Annoyances.—"Never excuſe yourſelf from mortification, by ſaying, that the occaſion that offers for it is inconſiderable: if it is a little thing, it will coſt you the leſs pains; but the conſequence is important: becauſe in theſe little things you always aſſert the empire over your paſſions; from whence it will follow, that in matters of the greateſt moment you will be maſter of yourſelf, and no paſſion will be able to prevail againſt you."

"The rigour of the ſeaſons, cold, heat, hunger, thirſt, ill weather, ſickneſs, wounds, victuals ill dreſſed, a bed ill

made, a diſagreeable ſmell, the ſtinging of a bee, and a thouſand other little accidents that happen to us, give us a fair opportunity to promote our ſalvation, if we ſuffer them patiently without complaining."

Perſonal Antipathies.—"As ſome certain perſons pleaſe us by a ſort of ſympathy, we know not why; ſo others diſpleaſe us by a ſort of antipathy which we can give no account of. It is somewhat difficult entirely to conquer theſe averſions, becauſe ſometimes they proceed from nature and conſtitution: but we may prevent the outward appearance of it, by ſuppreſſing all contemptuous and reproachful language.

"Antipathy thus governed may be compared to a wild beaſt chained: as long as you keep it confined it is not able to do any hurt; but if you once let it looſe it is incredible what miſchief it will do to yourſelf and everybody elſe. As long as you give no outward teſtimonies of your averſion, it will be attended with no ill conſequence, provided you do not pleaſe yourſelf with ſuch thoughts, but rather endeavour to ſuppreſs the irregular motions they may occaſion; but if once you give way to your antipathy by doing everything which that dictates, in a little time you will contract a great deal of guilt. Therefore bear with patience whatever is ſhocking to you in other people."

Anger.—"Never ſay anything in a paſſion. Let the ſmoke fly off, let the troubled water ſettle, and then you will be able to diſcover what reaſon requires from you, when the ſtorm of paſſion is quieted.

"Let me farther give you a little hint upon this ſubject. I find ſeveral are able to moderate themſelves when they are provoked to anger, and can govern their reſentment at the time when they are offended; but ſome time after they apply themſelves to their friends and intimates to relate to them the bad treatment they have received; and under the pretence of aſking advice, and of ſeeking comfort, they will make a long narration of the injuries they have received. Now to what purpoſe is all this diſcourſe, and what does it ſerve for, but to renew their reſentment, which was almoſt

appeaſed; and to rekindle their anger, which was almoſt extinguiſhed?"

Humility.—"There are ſome who appear humble, and who give way to others, but at the ſame time are very glad that others ſhould take notice of it; if they put up with an affront, or bear patiently any reflection, they are deſirous of being applauded. 'I know,' ſay they, 'what you have ſaid againſt me, but I will think no more of it, ſince it is a man's duty to bear contempt for the love of God.' Another will come and relate the pains he has taken upon an occaſion of practiſing his duty, the humiliation and mortification he has ſuffered. The beſt part of this virtue is loſt when we deſire to make it known to others, when we acquaint them with what we know others ſay and do againſt us. True humility conſits in ſuffering of humiliation and mortification, without deſiring that any one ſhould know we ſuffer it."

The practice of Virtue.—"It is by writing, that one learns to write; it is by painting and drawing, that one learns to draw and paint; and it is by practiſing virtue, that one learns it and grows perfect in it. Aſk a virtue of God never ſo long, reflect upon it never ſo ſeriouſly, read all the books that treat of it, and hear the moſt excellent preachers that recommend it, ſet the beſt examples of it before your eyes, and make the firmeſt reſolutions to attain it; yet if you never really practiſe it, nor exerciſe yourſelf in it, you ſhall never be maſter of it. Set therefore immediately about this method; for it is in humbling yourſelf, that you become humble. It is in making frequent acts of the love of God, that you become enamoured with him; it is by patient ſuffering, without repining, that you learn patience; and it is by denying yourſelf, that you become mortified to the things of this world."

2. The next in order of Nelſon's devotional writings was an Exhortation upon the Duty of Family Prayer;* a ſubject on which he loſt no opportunity of inſiſting, ſub-

* "An earneſt Exhortation to Houſekeepers to ſet up the Worſhip of God in their Families. With daily Prayers for Morning and Evening. The ſecond

joining prayers for families to each of his larger works, and in this little tract preſſing the obligation upon parents in humble life. It was early taken upon the liſt of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, and diſtributed gratuitouſly to their correſpondents, and it reached as many as twelve editions in the fifty years that ſucceeded its publication. It is now, however, of ſuch unfrequent occurrence, that a quotation from it may here be acceptable, as a ſample of the ſimple and familiar language in which Nelſon could addreſs the uneducated poor :—

"Let it be your care that your children be taught to read, and then to learn the Church Catechiſm, with ſome ſhort prayers for morning and evening, which you muſt oblige them conſtantly to uſe. Be very ſevere with them if they tell lies, or betake themſelves to pilfering tricks, or lightly uſe the name of God, eſpecially if they ſwear by that ſacred name, or offend againſt modeſty by any filthy or obſcene words or actions. Your authority ought to influence and reſtrain them till their reaſon can diſcover the advantages of piety, and the folly and ingratitude of ſinning againſt God, and breaking His holy commandments. Indulgence in theſe caſes may be of fatal conſequence, for by letting the reins of government hang looſe, children will abandon themſelves to the conduct of their paſſions, which they are moſt inclined to follow, and you will quickly repent that fondneſs which, by dear-bought experience, will be found to have ruined your children. Never omit carrying them with you to church on the Lord's Day, and ſee that they behave themſelves reverently at the public worſhip.

"But what I chiefly deſigned to recommend to you at

edition 1702." The firſt edition I have not ſeen. It is thus referred to in the Minutes of the S.P.C.K. "1702. April 16. Ordered that Dr. Woodward's two pieces on Confirmation, and another little tract about Family Prayer, be added to the ordinary packets which are ſent to the correſpondents. July 23. Ordered, that 500 Serious Exhortations to Houſekeepers be delivered to the agents (of ſchools), together with two Paſtoral Letters to be diſtributed according to their diſcretion."

preſent was, to ſet up the worſhip of God in your families, by the conſtant performing of morning and evening prayer, and by reading a Pſalm and chapter in the New Teſtament before you begin that holy exerciſe. This will be the beſt means to preſerve a ſenſe and ſpirit of religion in your families; by this method they will be conſtantly put in mind of their duty; for the matter of it is contained in ſuch prayers, and what we aſk of God we are obliged to uſe our utmoſt endeavours to obtain. And upon this condition God promiſes the influences of His grace, which, provided we do our beſt, will always be ready to aſſiſt and ſtrengthen us in the doing and ſuffering His holy will.

"If you, or any one in the family can read, let him or her take the Bible, and gravely read a Pſalm and chapter in the New Teſtament, and then diſtinctly and reverently on your knees, offer up the following prayer to Almighty God. And whatever objections you may have as to your worldly affairs in a morning, I am ſure in the evening you have leiſure enough for this purpoſe. Let your children get by heart the two prayers that are added for them, and ſtand by them ſometimes, that they may learn to pray ſeriouſly and devoutly. When they are of a fit age, go with them to your miniſter, and deſire him to prepare them for Confirmation, and afterwards to receive the Bleſſed Sacrament."

Then follow Family Devotions for morning and evening, with private prayers for children and ſervants.

3. Nelſon's palmary work on the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church * appeared in 1703, the preface bearing the date of All Saints' Day in that year. The plan of it had been ſchemed ten years before, in concert with his friend Kettlewell, and it had had the advantage of the friendly reviſion of Brokeſby and of Lee. To his worthy friend, Dr.

* "A Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England, with Collects and Prayers for each Solemnity. 1704." In 1707 appeared the "Fourth edition; with additions;" theſe additions compriſing the marginal notes, and the chapters for Eaſter Monday and Tueſday, and Whit Monday and Tueſday.

Cave, he alſo confeſſes himſelf indebted for the hiſtorical particulars which he has given; and a compariſon of Nelſon's "Feſtivals" with Dr. Cave's "Lives of the Apoſtles and Evangeliſts," will exhibit a very large amount of verbal coincidence, and ſhow the great extent of Nelſon's obligations to his friend. To Nelſon belongs the merit of careful and judicious execution, rather than of learned reſearch or of original conception in his work. The idea of compiling a popular body of divinity by way of commentary on the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Chriſtian year, had already been carried out, with ſome acceptance, by two divines of our church;* and a contemporary of Nelſon was engaged at the ſame time as himſelf, upon a ſimilar performance.† But the judicious and careful execution of Nelſon's book, together with the advantage of his perſonal character and poſition, won for it ſo inſtantaneous and ſo enduring a popularity, as altogether to eclipſe any previous or contemporary effort. The clergy of the day hailed their lay ally with enthuſiaſm, and zealouſly circulated a defence of their order and their church from a quarter that was above the world's ſuſpicions. His aſſociates at the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge loſt no opportunity of putting forward the production of one of the moſt honoured of their members. And if poor clergymen were to be ſelected for a ſuitable preſent; if a

* "The Holy Feaſts and Faſts of the Church, with meditations and prayers, by W. Brough, D.D. 1657."

"Θυσιαστήριον, ſive Scintilla Altaris. Primitive Devotion in the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church of England, by Ed. Sparkes, D.D. 6th edition. 1678."

† "Hiſtoria Sacra, or the Holy Hiſtory; giving an exact and comprehenſive account of all the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church of England, with their etymologies and appellations, and the true grounds and reaſons of their celebrations. Together with practical obſervations upon the ſeveral days and prayers concluding each diſtinct head. 1705." The book reached a 2nd. ed. 1720, 3rd, 1732. "As to Mr. Nelſon's Treatiſe on this ſubject," writes the author, "I had almoſt finiſhed mine before that appeared in the world, and, therefore, I have not enriched myſelf from that ſtore with any one obſervation that I have not made before."

ſchoolmiſtreſs at Nayland was to be rewarded for her exemplary conduct; if Mr. Oſtervald, the paſtor of Neufchatel, was to be encouraged in his deſign of making a nearer approach to the doctrine and diſcipline of the Engliſh Church; if a merchant was to be complimented for "his favour in tranſmitting the books of the Society beyond the ſeas," or a miſſionary was to be furniſhed for his ſtation;—nothing formed ſo appropriate and acceptable a gift as "Mr. Nelſon's Book on the Feſtivals and Faſts." It had not been publiſhed a couple of months, before the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel ordered it,* together with Mr. Oſtervald's Catechiſm, to be given to all their miſſionaries. It united in its favour the ſuffrages of contending theologies; and was commended by Mrs. Burnet (in her "Devotions,") as much as by Dr. Hickes. Ambroſe Bonwicke, at college, prepared himſelf for his diſſolution by the reflections and prayers for Eaſter Eve, and the youthful nonjuror was found dead in his chamber with "his Nelſon" beſide him.† The worthy and pious Thoreſby, a convert from the nonconformiſts, and retaining to the laſt much of puritan feeling, yet made it his conſtant manual of devotion,‡ as each ſacred ſeaſon of the Church returned. When viſiting the well-known Lady Elizabeth Haſtings, he found that religious and charitable lady employing it at

* Minute of S.P.G. Feb. 4, 170¾

† "Pattern for young Students in the Univerſity ſet forth in the Life of Mr. Ambroſe Bonwicke. 1729."

‡ "The Diary of Ralph Thoreſby," vol. ii., p. 53, "Concluded the pious Mr. Nelſon's moſt excellent treatiſe of the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church, with which I have been often much affected, and might have been ſtill more, if I could come nearer to the pattern ſet by the exemplary author who preſented this to me." P. 350, "Mr. Hole, by my lady's appointment, read our late friend Mr. Nelſon of the Feſtivals, to inſtruct the ſervants as to the Epiphany, then a chapter as uſually before family prayers; after which all retired to their private devotions, bleſſed be God for ſuch exemplars." P. 406, April 5. Die Dom. "Morning, read Burkitt, and Nelſon in the Feſtivals for Eaſter-day, having on the preceding days read thoſe in the Faſts for Good Friday and Eaſter Eve. Evening, read Nelſon."

family prayer for the inſtruction of her ſervants. Clergymen were not above adopting it for their perſonal edification, and Dr. Aſheton, the faithful paſtor of Beckenham, as his biographer informs us,* "primitively celebrated our religious Feaſts and Faſts according to the rules of that truly pious, charitable, and learned gentleman, Robert Nelſon, Eſq., in his excellent book thereupon." So largely was it circulated among every claſs, that in four years and a half more than 10,000 copies were printed. Two different tranſlations were made of it into German; and Mr. Williams, Lord Berkeley's chaplain, tranſlated it into Welſh. Nelſon ſaw it paſs through as many as eight editions in his lifetime, and he was able to value the copyright of it at no leſs than 500*l.* at his death. The work experienced no diminution of popularity after his deceaſe, and no fewer than twenty-eight editions of it were called for before the concluſion of the century. The different attempts† to abridge and improve upon it, and adapt it

* "The Chriſtian indeed and faithful Paſtor impartially repreſented in the Life and Works of the late eminent William Aſheton, D.D., Rector of Beckenham, in Kent." 1714. p. 159.

† I have met with the following:—

"Mr. Nelſon's Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England abridged. Together with a ſhort explanation of the morning and evening ſervice in the Book of Common Prayer. In 12 Catechetical exerciſes written for the uſe of St. Bride's Charity School, and publiſhed for the inſtruction of the charity children of London and Weſtminſter. By a late eminent Divine. 1739."

"A New Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England, with devotions proper to each ſolemnity. By G. Nallſon, Eſq., London. 1767."

"A New Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England, with devotions proper to each ſolemnity. Reviſed and corrected by Leo. Howard, D.D., chaplain to H.R.H. the Princeſs Dowager of Wales, and the author of the Royal Bible. Dublin, 1774." 2nd ed. 1814.

"The Chriſtian's Companion to the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church of England, containing an account of each ſolemnity; with conſiderations, the collect and a prayer for the day. London, 1795."

"Nelſon's Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England, with collects and prayers for each ſolemnity; abridged, with notes, by John Poynder, Eſq., from the original in the Catechetical form by Robert Nelſon, Eſq., both lay members of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge. 1809."

to later taſtes, are ſo many teſtimonies to its acknowledged reputation, and to the ſterling worth of its contents; while their failure to ſupplant it in popular eſteem, forms an additional evidence of the judiciouſneſs with which it is compiled.

This treatiſe forms, in ſhort, a complete popular manual of Anglican theology. In addition to the topics which would be more obviouſly ſuggeſted by the title of the work, we find our author here explaining the neceſſity and nature of revelation, the external evidence of Chriſtianity from the prophecies of the Old Teſtament and from the miracles of our Lord (which laſt are vindicated from infidel objections), and the internal evidence as diſplayed in the conſiſtency of its doctrines and the excellence of its precepts; the uſe of reaſon in religion, as diſcovering the principles of natural religion, and trying the evidence of that which is revealed; the inſpiration of Holy Scripture and the authority of the Church in its interpretation; the myſtery of the Trinity in Unity, the union of two natures in Chriſt, the divinity and the ſanctifying operations of the Holy Spirit; the vicarious ſacrifice of our Redeemer; the grace of holy baptiſm, the euchariſtic ſacrifice, the authority and benefit of confirmation, and the threefold miniſtry of the church as tranſmitted from the times of the Apoſtles. He teaches the intermediate ſtate of the ſoul between the hour of death and of reſurrection; he replies at length to various objections againſt the reſurrection of the body; he ſtates the argument for the immortality of the ſoul, glancing at his friend Dodwell's heterodox opinion of its natural mortality, and at Whiſton's erroneous explanation of the "ſleep" of death, a phraſe in Scripture, which refers, Nelſon ſays, to the body and not to the ſoul; he inſiſts on the ſpiritual benefits of union with Chriſt through his Church, and the conſequent guilt of ſchiſm, or cauſeleſs ſeparation

from its communion. Among more practical ſubjects, he treats of the efficacy of prayer, the indiſpenſable duty of family devotion, and the obligation of attending (if poſſible) the daily ſervice of the church; the nature of repentance; the duty of reading Holy Scripture, which he vindicates againſt the reſtrictions of the Romiſh Church; the practice of ſelf-examination and religious meditation; the reverence due to holy places; the duties of ſickneſs, and the danger of a deathbed repentance; the obligation of rebuking ſin, and the virtues of humility and ſelf-denial.

The arguments by which he ſupports each point of doctrine are generally obvious and ſolid, and his practical reflections are juſt and uſeful. The moſt prominent defect in this (as in Nelſon's other writings) is an entire abſence of imagination, ſo that his "Companion" forms a very proſaic "Chriſtian Year;" and the devotions at the cloſe of each chapter (except when they are borrowed from his friends Ken, Kettlewell, or Hickes) muſt be acknowledged to be very tame and cold, and to want entirely that ſharpneſs of ejaculation which is the characteriſtic of earneſt prayer. But his rounded ſtyle and careful periods, unfitted as they are for the language of devotion, yet always cover ſolid ſenſe, and are not ill ſuited for a manual of formal inſtruction, ſuch as he deſigned in his "Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England."

The following quotations may be allowed in illuſtration of the ſtyle and matter of this once popular and influential volume, which at the preſent time, it is to be feared, is more known by reputation than by actual uſe, but which is better calculated than any other work we poſſeſs to become a recogniſed manual of religious inſtruction for our middle claſſes.

On the Resurrection of the Body.—From the chapter for Tuesday in Easter-week.

"*Q.* What are we to believe concerning the resurrection of the body?

"*A.* We are to believe, as a necessary and infallible truth, that as it is appointed for all men once to die, so it is also determined that all men should rise from death; that their bodies, committed to the grave, and dissolved into dust, or scattered into ashes, shall at the last day be re-collected, and be re-united to their souls; that the same bodies that lived before shall be revived; that this resurrection shall be universal, the just to enjoy everlasting life, and the wicked to be condemned to everlasting punishment.

"*Q.* Why ought we to establish ourselves in the belief of the resurrection of the body?

"*A.* Because it is one of the great articles of the Christian faith, though the heathens of old, and the infidels of latter times, make it one of their great objections against Christianity, upon the pretence of the impossibility of the doctrine; which, if true, had made it highly unreasonable to have been proposed to the belief of Christians. But this article is not only possible, but highly probable to reason, and upon Christian principles infallibly certain.

"*Q.* What evidence doth right reason afford us for the possibility of the resurrection of the body?

"*A.* The proof of the necessary existence of an infinite perfect being, arises chiefly from those visible effects of his wisdom and power and goodness, which we see in the frame of the universe; from whence it follows, that God made the world, and gave to all creatures life and breath; which makes it evident to reason that he who can do the greater, can undoubtedly do the less; it being plainly altogether as easy for God to raise the body again after death as to create and form it at first; it being a less effect of power to raise a body when resolved into dust, than to make all things out of nothing.

"*Q.* But is it not impossible to rally the same parts of a body, after they are mouldered into dust, and have under-

gone a variety of changes, and by infinite accidents have been ſcattered up and down in the world?

"*A.* It is true, the heathens objected this againſt the primitive Chriſtians; and in order, as they thought, to diſabuſe them and diſappoint them, they burnt the bodies of the martyrs, and ſcattered their aſhes in the air to be blown about by the wind: but the weakneſs of this objection appears from the falſe foundation it is grounded upon, it wholly depending upon a miſtake of the nature of God and his providence, as if it did not extend to the ſmalleſt things, as if God did not know all things he had made, and had them not always in his view, and perfectly under his command; whereas infinite knowledge underſtands the moſt minute things, and infinite power can order them as he pleaſes.

"*Q.* But how can bodies, that have been devoured by cannibals, who chiefly live on human fleſh, or bodies eaten up by fiſhes, and turned to their nouriſhment, and then thoſe fiſhes perhaps eaten up by other men, and converted into the ſubſtance of their bodies, how ſhould both theſe, at the reſurrection, recover their own body?

"*A.* In order to ſatisfy this objection it muſt be conſidered that the body of man is not a conſtant and permanent, but a ſucceſſive thing, which is continually ſpending and renewing itſelf, loſing ſomething of the matter it had before, and gaining new; ſo that it is undeniably certain from experience that men frequently change their bodies, and that the body a man hath at any time of his life is as much his own body as that which he hath at his death. So that if the very matter of the body, which a man had at any time of his life, be raised, it is as much his own and the ſame body as that which he had at his death; which does clearly ſolve the forementioned difficulty, ſince any of thoſe bodies he had at any time before he was eaten, is every whit as good, and as much his own, as that which was eaten. It hath been moreover obſerved, that ſcarce the hundredth part of what we eat is digeſted into the ſubſtance of our bodies, that all the reſt is rendered back again into the common maſs of matter by ſenſible or inſenſible evacuations; therefore what ſhould hinder an Omnipotent Power from

raiſing the body a cannibal hath devoured out of the ninety-nine parts which return into the common maſs of matter? Others, to anſwer this difficulty, think it not improbable that the original ſtamina, which contain all and every one of the ſolid parts and veſſels of the body, even the minuteſt nerves and fibres, are themſelves the entire body; and that all the extraneous matter which, coming in by way of nouriſhment, fills up and extends the minute and inſenſible veſſels, of which all the viſible and ſenſible veſſels are compoſed, is not ſtrictly and properly part of the body; and that conſequently while all this extraneous matter, which ſerves only to ſwell the body to its juſt magnitude, is in continual flux, the original ſtamina may remain unchanged, and ſo no confuſion of bodies will be poſſible in nature. They have farther ſuppoſed, otherwiſe to ſolve the difficulty, that in like manner as in every grain of corn there is contained a minute inſenſible ſeminal principle, which is itſelf the entire future blade and ear, and in due ſeaſon, when all the reſt of the grain is corrupted, unfolds itſelf viſibly into the form; ſo our preſent mortal and corruptible body may be but the exuviæ, as it were, of ſome hidden and at preſent inſenſible principle, which at the reſurrection ſhall diſcover itſelf in its proper form, by which way alſo there can be no confuſion of bodies poſſible in nature. And it is not without ſome weight that St. Paul made uſe of the ſame compariſon, and that the ancient fathers of the Church have alledged the ſame ſimilitude."

On humility.—From the Chapter for the Purification.

"*Q.* Wherein conſiſts the exerciſe of humility?

"*A.* In avoiding to publiſh our own praiſes, or to beg the praiſes of others by giving them a handle to commend us. In not placing too much pleaſure and ſatisfaction in hearing the good things that are ſaid of us, becauſe they are often rather the effect of civility and charity than what we deſerve. In doing nothing on purpoſe to draw the eyes and good opinion of men, but purely to pleaſe God. In bearing the reproaches, the injuries, and the affronts of bad men with patience and meekneſs; the reproofs of our

friends with thankfulneſs. In not contemning others, though inferior to us in ſome advantages of body or mind, but being ready to give them that honour and praiſe they juſtly deſerve. In pitying and compaſſionating the ſins and follies of our fellow Chriſtians, it being the effect of God's grace that we are not overcome by the ſame temptations. In carrying ourſelves with great reſpect to our ſuperiors, with courteſy and affability to our inferiors, and ſubmitting to the loweſt offices for the ſervice of our neighbour. In receiving from the hands of God all afflictions and trials with entire reſignation and ſubmiſſion, as offenders under the hand of juſtice."

On religious differences.—From the Chapter for St. Barnabas' Day.

"*Q.* How ought religious differences to be debated among Chriſtians?

"*A.* With a greater regard to the diſcovery of truth, than to the eſtabliſhing a reputation for learning and knowledge. Without throwing ſcorn and contempt upon those that oppoſe us; becauſe, if they are under the power of error, they are objects of Chriſtian compaſſion, and are made unfit to receive the impreſſion of good arguments, by being prejudiced and provoked by ill treatment. Without railing and injurious reflections, which no way concern the cauſe, and which are by good manners baniſhed converſation, and therefore are indecent to be uſed in writing. Without detracting from the real worth of our adverſaries, and charging them with believing conſequences which we know they abhor. Without ever ſuffering our paſſions to vent themſelves under a pretence of zeal for God's glory, but to give an account of our faith, with that meekneſs that governs the unreaſonable ſallies of anger, and with that fear which makes us cautious not to tranſgreſs thoſe rules of charity which we are obliged to obſerve towards our neighbour."

4. Nelſon's laſt devotional compoſition was his "Chriſ-

tian Sacrifice," which appeared in 1706,* and in which he gives an expanded view of the doctrine and duty of the Holy Communion, upon the principles which he had previouſly indicated in his "True Devotion," and his "Companion to the Feſtivals and Faſts." This long-popular manual contains a perſuaſive to frequent communion, an expoſition of the primitive doctrines of the Euchariſt, and a collection of private devotions, to be uſed during the celebration of the Sacrament.

"They that are acquainted," he writes, "with eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, know very well, that the Euchariſt, in the pureſt ages of the Church, made a part of their daily public ſervice; and when the devotion of Chriſtians began to decline, they yet always upon the Lord's Day celebrated the Chriſtian Sacrifice. Our ſecond ſervice at the altar ſeems defective without a conformable practice to antiquity in this point; and the holy exerciſes of the Lord's Day appear to want their due perfection without theſe Euchariſtical devotions. To this purpoſe our Church has encouraged a conſtant weekly communion, by permitting it to be celebrated where *three or four perſons are ready and willing to communicate;* as being aſſured by our Saviour, that *where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he is* himſelf *in the midſt of them.* And if the parochial miniſter ſhould begin with ſuch a ſmall number, it is likely they would quickly increaſe, at leaſt it will demonſtrate his own zeal to ſhow forth the Lord's death, and may bring a bleſſing upon his pariſh, as well as upon the other labours of his holy function.

In order to quicken the eſtabliſhing of this primitive devotion, I cannot forbear ſuggeſting an obſervation made by ſeveral of the reverend clergy who have been zealous in this matter, viz., That where communions have been

* "The great Duty of frequenting the Chriſtian Sacrifice, and the nature of the Preparation required; with ſuitable devotions, partly collected from the ancient liturgies. 1706." This edition ends with the Acts of Humility. The Acts of Contrition and of Praiſe, with the concluding devotions, were added by Nelſon in ſubſequent editions.

frequent, the number of the communicants hath ſenſibly increaſed, which, I think, ought to be no ſmall encouragement to have the holy myſteries celebrated in all pariſh churches on every Lord's Day; becauſe this ſhows a great diſpoſition in the laity to be brought to a ſenſe of their duty, and conſequently, muſt animate the zeal of their paſtors to give them ſuch frequent opportunities of commemorating the death and paſſion of our bleſſed Saviour.

"To this holy end and purpoſe, I have endeavoured, by proper arguments to preſs the duty of frequent communion upon the conſciences of men; for all thoſe motives that perſuade us to communicate at all, ought to prevail upon us to do it often; and it appears to me very plain that no ſincere Chriſtian, not otherwiſe lawfully hindered, can juſtify going out of the church when the Chriſtian Sacrifice is celebrated; nor is there any pretence or excuſe ſufficiently valid for a man that is in earneſt with religion, to turn his back upon the Holy Table, when the heavenly banquet is there prepared."

Theſe ſentiments were ſhared by very many of the devout Churchmen of Nelſon's time. The exemplary James Bonnell (his biographer informs us)* "had ſuch longing deſires after that ſacred memorial of our Saviour's love, that he could not allow himſelf to want it, whenever it might be had; ſo that at laſt he received every Lord's Day." Sir Edmund Turner, we are told,† "partook of the Holy Sacrament, where he had opportunities (as he always had in town and at his own ſeat) every Lord's Day, and of late every holy day alſo; and for this great duty he kept himſelf in a conſtant ſtate of preparation by his very frequent devotions, ſerious meditations, and generally weekly faſtings on the days before." The Lady Elizabeth Haſtings, when incapacitated by illneſs from attending the

* "The Exemplary Life and Character of James Bonnell, Eſq., by Wm. Hamilton, M.A. 1718." p. 163.

† Biſhop Mant's "Feriæ Anniverſariæ." p. 232.

public ſervices of the Church, as ſhe had been uſed,* "had the daily ſervice read, and the holy communion adminiſtered to her every Lord's Day, in her houſe." Archbiſhop Sharp made it a practice to receive every Lord's Day, and when the Sunday found him upon a journey, he would requeſt the miniſter of the place where he chanced to be, to celebrate it that day for his ſake.† Dr. Dennis Granville, Dean of Durham, exerted himſelf to reſtore the weekly ſacrament in the cathedral, before his deprivation.‡ Beveridge revived the weekly communion at the church of St. Peter's, Cornhill, and earneſtly recommended it in his writings. "I never expect," he ſays, "to ſee our Church ſettled, primitive antiquity revived, and true piety and virtue flouriſh again among us, till the holy communion be oftener celebrated than it hath been of late in all places of the kingdom, and am ſure that if people were but ſenſible of the great advantage it would be to them, they would need no other argument to perſuade them to frequent it as often as they can." In fifteen§ other churches and chapels of the metropolis, this means of grace was as frequently diſpenſed. At the chapel which Nelſon frequented in Ormond Street, the Holy Communion was adminiſtered "every Sunday, as well as on Good

* Biſhop Mant's "Feriæ Anniverſariæ." p. 311.

† "Life of Sharp," vol. ii. 76, 7.

‡ "Memoir of Sir Geo. Wheeler" (Granville's nephew), in Zouch's Works, vol. ii. p. 168.

§ "Pietas Londinenſis," by James Paterſon, M.A. 1714. It may be intereſting to ſpecify the churches which were then ſo honourably diſtinguiſhed. They were Allhallows, Barking (where Hickes had been rector); St. Andrew's, Holborn; St. Ann and St. Agnes, Alderſgate, where an early communion and ſermon at 7 a.m. was maintained by a Religious Society; St. Clement's Danes; Duke-ſtreet Chapel, Weſtminſter, on all Sundays and holy days; St. Dunſtan's in the Weſt, on every Sunday and holy day, and every day in the octaves of Chriſtmas, Eaſter, and Whit Sunday; St. Paul's Cathedral; the Chapels Royal of St. James and Whitehall; St. Lawrence Jewry, at 6 a.m.; St. Martin's-in-the-Fields; St. Mary's, Whitechapel, every Sunday and on Eaſter Monday and Tueſday, Aſh-Wedneſday and Good Friday; St. Saviour's, Southwark, weekly, from Eaſter to Trinity

Friday, New Year's Day, and ſome other ſolemn occaſions;" and in his will he marks his ſatisfaction at ſuch frequency of celebration, by bequeathing a ſmall legacy to Dr. Marſhall, the miniſter, "in regard of his conſtant attendance at the Euchariſtical Sacrifice."

His doctrine of the Euchariſtic Sacrifice he expreſſes in the following terms:—

"That when our Saviour celebrated the Jewiſh Sacrifice of the Paſſover with his diſciples, a little before his ſufferings, he ſubſtituted the Sacrament of His Body and His Blood as the true Chriſtian Sacrifice in room of the Paſſover; and ordained it as a rite to invocate His Father by, inſtead of the manifold and bloody ſacrifices of the law, and to be a means of ſupplication and addreſs to God in the New Teſtament, as they were in the Old:—that in this Sacrifice the bread and the wine are offered to God to acknowledge him Lord of the creatures; and accordingly in the ancient Church they were laid on the holy table by the prieſt (as they are ſtill ordered to be done by the rubrick in the Church of England*), and tendered to God by this ſhort prayer, '*Lord, we offer thy own out of what thou haſt*

Sunday; and St. Stephen's, Coleman-ſtreet. At Bow church and St. Matthew, Friday-ſtreet, on every holy day. At the latter church the Holy Communion was celebrated daily for two or three years by Ed. Stephens, who ſeldom had leſs than 30 communicants every day. See "Chriſtian Remembrancer," No. 85, p. 207. In illuſtration of the above early hours of celebration, it may be mentioned that even Biſhop Fleetwood ſpeaks of receiving the ſacrament faſting as then a common practice, and recommends it, if not inconvenient, as "in decency and regard to ancient practice."—*Reaſonable Communicant.*

* That this was rarely obſerved in Nelſon's time, appears from a letter (June 10, 1707) of Sir Geo. Wheeler's to Hickes, where he complains: "But now this is not obſerved in cathedral churches I was ever at the communion of, the want of which being gravely and reverendly performed, has much helped I doubt not to raiſe unſound notions and to make the Table of the Lord contemptible." See Life by Zouch. On the other hand, Nelſon tells us of Biſhop Bull: "He always placed the elements of bread and wine upon the altar himſelf, after he had received them either from the churchwarden or clerk, or had taken them from ſome convenient place, where they were laid for that purpoſe. His conſtant practice was to offer them upon the Holy Table." Life, p. 62.

bountifully given us':—that they by conſecration being made ſymbols of the Body and Blood of Chriſt, we thereby repreſent to God the Father the paſſion of his Son, to the end that He may, for His ſake, according to the tenor of His covenant in Him, be favourable and propitious to us, miſerable ſinners:—that as Chriſt intercedes continually for us in heaven, by preſenting His death and ſatisfaction to His Father; ſo the Church on earth in like manner may approach the throne of Grace, by repreſenting Chriſt unto His Father in theſe holy myſteries of His death and paſſion:—that what every Chriſtian does mentally and vocally, when he recommends his prayers to God the Father, through Jeſus Chriſt, making mention of His death and ſatisfaction; that, in the public ſervice of the Church is done by this rite, which our Saviour commanded in commemoration of him."

Or, as he more ſhortly expreſſes it in his Preface:—

"This Chriſtian Sacrifice was ordained, not only to put us in mind of thoſe great bleſſings which our Saviour purchaſed for us by His death (for what man that reflects upon his Chriſtianity can eaſily forget them?) but it was alſo eſtabliſhed as a ſacred rite to ſupplicate God the Father, by the merits of our Saviour's Paſſion, repreſenting to Him the ſymbols of His Body and Blood, that thereby He may become favourable and propitious to us. This ſenſe of it is agreeable to the Holy Scriptures, as they were underſtood by thoſe who lived nigheſt to the times of the Apoſtles, and has been evidently proved ſo by the learned, judicious, and pious Mr. Mede."

Mede is not the only author of our Church whom Nelſon might have alleged as an authority for the ſacrificial character of the Euchariſt, nor was his own "Chriſtian Sacrifice" the firſt manual of devotion in which it had been prominently put forward. The "Officium Euchariſticum" of Dr. Lake,* in which it is ſimilarly taught, had long

* Archdeacon of Exeter, Chaplain and Tutor to the Princeſſes Mary and

been a popular manual. Dr. Edwards, the veteran and almoſt ſolitary champion of Calviniſm within our Church at that period, declaimed againſt it as a "darling notion, more and more prevailing." It was taught by Nelſon's contemporaries, Biſhops Ken, Bull, and Wilſon. His friend Archbiſhop Sharp* regretted the abſence of the prayer of oblation in the ſecond Prayer-book of Edward VI. Beveridge, while careful to proſcribe the notion of a propitiatory ſacrifice, was yet earneſt for one which was commemorative and declaratory in the Euchariſt. "This," he ſays, "is now our Chriſtian ſhewbread, whereby we ſhow forth the Lord's death till He come; this is our burnt-offering, our ſin-offering, our treſpaſs-offering, our thank-offering, our meat-offering, our drink-offering, and all the offerings required of us, whereby to commemorate our bleſſed Saviour for what he hath done for us." Potter, in his "Diſcourſe upon Church Government," publiſhed the year after Nelſon's book, has an elaborate expoſition of the ſame doctrine; Hickes had always been jealous for the Chriſtian prieſthood and ſacrifice; and John Johnſon, of Cranbrook, went far beyond Hickes in his "Unbloody Sacrifice" and his "Propitiatory Oblation."

The works of Hickes and Johnſon provoked a vehement oppoſition from Trimnel, Biſhop of Norwich, as well as from Waterland, and ſome minor controverſialiſts; and the perſonal character of Nelſon did not preſerve his book from ſimilar animadverſions. But he left the taſk of reply to more practiſed debaters, and was content to ſee his "Chriſtian Sacrifice" rapidly acquiring the ſame amount of popular eſteem which was enjoyed by his "Feſtivals and Faſts." His friends at the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge took 1000 copies for circulation. It

Ann. His "Officium Euchariſticum" was publiſhed 1673. It reached a 15th edition in 1693, and a 30th in 1743.

* Sharp's Life. Vol. i., 335.

reached a fifth edition before his death, and was reprinted ſixteen times before the concluſion of the century.* The devotions at its cloſe are more deſerving of public acceptance than thoſe attached to his previous works. They owe their original, he ſays, "to the ancient liturgies of the Chriſtian Church, which I have carefully peruſed, and have tranſplanted many a pious thought and warm expreſſion from thoſe ſources into this private compoſure." Some extracts may be obſerved in them from the "Preces ante Miſſam" of the Latin Church.

5. Prefixed to the fourth edition of the "Chriſtian Sacrifice" (1712) were ſome "Inſtructions for them that come to be confirmed, by way of queſtion and anſwer," which had previouſly appeared as a ſeparate tract. It was early put upon the liſt of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, paſſed through thirty-ſix editions in the courſe of the laſt century, and maintains its place upon the Catalogue at the preſent day. This little manual concludes the liſt of Robert Nelſon's devotional writings.

* 16th edit. 1786.

CHAPTER V.

ROBERT NELSON IN HIS FAMILY RELATIONS.

Robert Nelſon's relatives.—His mother ; he attends her on her death-bed.—His wife ; his account of her illneſs.—His ſtep-ſon, Sir Berkeley Lucy ; he bequeaths to him his Library.—His father-in-law, the 1ſt Earl Berkeley. His brother-in-law the 2nd Earl—Nelſon ſummoned to his death-bed.—The Counteſs Berkeley ; her character by Swift.—Nelſon's acquaintance with Swift.—Letter to him on Lord Berkeley's Epitaph.—The Hanger family.—Nelſon's Letters to George and Gabriel Hanger.—Gabriel Hanger's after life.

Of Robert Nelſon's intercourſe with his own relations not many particulars have been preſerved. Enough, however, may be gleaned to gratify our natural curioſity to view a public character in the unreſerve of private life, and to aſſure us that he did not ſuffer the avocations of charity to engroſs him to the detriment of domeſtic duty, and that in every family with which he was connected he was the eſteemed and truſted kinſman and the ever welcome gueſt.

His father (as we have ſeen) he loſt in his infancy. His mother was ſpared to old age ; and one of his ſhort notes to Wanley ſhows him to us in attendance on her dying bed. "My mother is ſo very ill I cannot leave her. I fear ſhe is *in extremis*. Let me know what is done. I am at Mr. Lordel's, in Monument Yard." (Dec. 22, 1703.) A few days afterwards he laid her in the chancel of St. Martin's Outwich,* where her father and mother had been laid, and

* Extract from the Regiſter of St. Martin's Outwich. "Burials.
"1703, Jan. 4. Delicia Nelſon from St. Margaret, New Fiſh-ſtreet Hill, buried."

where her brother, Sir Gabriel Roberts, with other members of her family, was afterwards interred. Mrs. Nelſon left her ſon principal legatee and executor of her will.

The ſlight diſparity of age has already been remarked on which exiſted between Robert Nelſon and his wife. But neither this nor their difference in religion was ſufficient to impair (though the latter at leaſt might try) the ſincerity of their mutual affection. When Wanley begged the loan of his portrait* by Kneller, in order to have a copy made of it for himſelf, Nelſon begged that the removal of it might be deferred till his return from Bath, in terms which imply the fondeſt affection on his lady's part. "I ſhall be very ready to comply with your deſire, and only beg the deferring of it till my return. My wife is at home, and ſhe does not know how to ſupply the want of it in my abſence." (May 13, 1702). Other mentions of her name in his correſpondence equally exhibit the affectionate ſolicitude with which he watched her declining health. Thus he ſhares his anxieties reſpecting her with his old friend Dr. Mapletoft, in the following letter; the medical details of which may be excuſed in conſideration of the conjugal ſolicitude which ſuch a ſpecification implies.

"16th Feb., $179\frac{8}{9}$."†

"Sir,—The concern you expreſs for your friends makes it reaſonable you ſhould have ſome account of us ſince we left Blackheath. Dr. Radcliff came to us next morning; he

* A wretched daub, now hanging in the Committee Room of the S.P.C.K., may poſſibly be the copy made for Wanley. A fine portrait (half-length) by Kneller, was given in 1779 by Nichols to the Company of Stationers, and is placed in the parlor of the public hall. A ſimilar one, alſo bearing Kneller's name, is in the poſſeſſion of the Rev. H. M. Majendie, vicar of Speen, having been bought at the ſale of Sir Geo. Bowyer's at Radley Houſe, Oxon. A large full-length by Kneller is in the Bodleian Gallery, to which it was given by Rev. Jas. Craven, in 1769.

† "European Magazine," vol. xv., p. 274.

does not venture either to purge or vomit my wife. He gives her a bitter infuſion twice a day, and as often eight drops of tincture of ſteel in a glaſs of Spa water, with ſome ingredients of roots in white wine poſſet drink, which ſhe may uſe as often as ſhe pleaſes. This method he expects ſhe ſhould ſtick to for ſome time. I muſt confeſs I cannot find any alteration for the better. What he aims at is to recover her ſtomach, and to ſtop thoſe paſſages whereby the gall flows into the blood. She eats little, and has had worſe nights in town than in the country. I beg, Sir, your prayers that God would be pleaſed to bleſs the means that are uſed for her recovery, which I may expect from you as a friend as well as a Chriſtian.

"I am, moſt faithfully yours,

"NELSON.

"We are lodged at the Black Poſts, in Leiceſter Fields.

"To Dr. Mapletoft, at his
houſe in Greenwich."

She died on Jan. 26, 1705;* her fortune devolving upon her huſband at her deceaſe, and enabling him ſtill further to enlarge his always munificent charity.

With his wife's children by her former huſband, he always continued on the moſt kindly terms. Her ſon Sir Berkeley Lucy, the correſpondent of Locke, and the admirer of Collins the deiſt, could not have been in all reſpects a congenial aſſociate. But Nelſon was his frequent viſitor at his ſeat of Woodcote, and by way of antidote perhaps to his ſceptical tendencies, bequeathed to him his

* Extract from the Regiſter of Cranford Church. "Burials.

"Jan. 31, $170\frac{5}{6}$. The Lady Theophila Nelſon, daughter of y^e^ late Earl of Berkeley, of y^e^ Pariſh of St. Andrew, Holborn, was buried."

This date will ſhow that Mr. Teale is miſtaken, when he ſuggeſts that Nelſon might be alluding in cold terms to the death of his wife, in a letter to Wanley of Dec. 11, 1705. Teale's "Lives of Engliſh Laymen," p. 288.

valuable library, conſiſting in great part of books of theology and devotion.*

Into the Berkeley family Nelſon was received with all the cordiality which genuine worth and congenial taſtes would ſecure to him. His father-in-law, the firſt Earl of Berkeley, had been open to religious impreſſions in his youth; he had been benefited, like Nelſon, by the friendſhip of Tillotſon, and he had been the author of a moral and religious work,† which had ſome popularity at the time, and in which he ſhows that he could appreciate thoſe endeavours in "doing good" to which his ſon-in-law devoted himſelf. "To do good," he writes, "is the moſt pleaſant employment in the world, and the moſt natural; it is to be like God, who is good and doeth good; it is to be like the bleſſed angels, whoſe great employment it is to be miniſtering ſpirits for the good of others. To be charitable and beneficial to mankind is to be a good angel, and a Saviour, and a God to men."

With his brother-in-law, the ſecond Earl, Nelſon continued upon the ſame footing of kindlineſs and friendſhip. He was his habitual almoner in town, and his conſtant gueſt at Cranford, where he "found the ſame freedom," he ſays, "as if he were in his own home." He received a haſty ſummons to Berkeley Caſtle to aſſiſt him on his death-bed.

"I made a journey," he writes,‡ "to Berkeley Caſtle to no

* On the death of Sir B. Lucy, the united collection was ſold by auction in 1760, by Mr. Samuel Paterſon, forming a moſt extraordinary aſſemblage of devotion and infidelity. The ſale laſted 33 days, there being as many as 4886 lots, beſides ſome others not then come to hand, which were ſold the following year in an anonymous auction. Nichols' "Lit. Anec." vol. iv. p. 188.

† "Hiſtorical Applications and occaſional Meditations upon various Subjects, written by a Perſon of Honor." 1670. It went through three editions from 1670 to 1680. It is addreſſed to Mary, Counteſs of Warwick, the daughter of Richard Boyle, Earl of Cork, a lady who at his deſire had given him rules of holy living in his youth. 1659.

‡ Nelſon to Mapletoft. St. Luke's Day, 1710. "European Magazine," vol. xvi., p. 167. Lord Berkeley died 24th Sept., 1710.

purpoſe, for my lord was dead before I could arrive, and yet I went with great expedition, and rid poſt, which I have diſuſed for many years. When my lord found himſelf in ſinking circumſtances, he deſired to ſpeak with me, ſo that the expreſs that came for his ſon brought me letters, which was the reaſon for my undertaking the journey. But though I was diſappointed in ſeeing my lord, I had the ſatisfaction to hear that he died with great piety and devotion, and bore his pains with great patience. He thanked God that he had not deferred the great buſineſs of repentance to a ſick bed, which he found a very improper ſeaſon for a matter of that importance; and I know that his lordſhip had been ſerious in religion for ſome time, which makes me hope with reaſon that his repentance was accepted."

With the Counteſs, Nelſon was on equal terms of friendſhip, and received from her, he ſays, during his ſtays at Cranford, all the attentions of a mother. This was the lady to whom Swift dedicated his "Project for the Advancement of Religion," * as to one in whom "the eaſieſt and politeſt converſation, joined with the trueſt piety, may be obſerved in as great perfection as they were ever ſeen apart in any other perſon;" complimenting her "that by your prudence and management under ſeveral diſadvantages you have preſerved the luſtre of that noble family into which you were grafted; and which the unwarrantable profuſion of anceſtors for many generations had too much eclipſed. Then how happily you perform every office of life to which Providence has called you; in the education of thoſe two incomparable daughters, whoſe conduct is ſo univerſally admired, in every duty of a prudent, complying, and affectionate wife, in that care which deſcends to the meaneſt of your domeſtics; and, laſtly, in that endleſs

* The pamphlet ſeems alſo to have been ſubmitted to Nelſon's judgment. "With Mr. Nelſon, I am entirely of opinion that her Majeſty's reading of that book of the Project for the increaſe of morality and piety, may be of very great uſe to that end." Lord Berkeley to Dr. Swift. "Swift's Letters," vol. i., p. 8. Ed. 1767.

bounty to the poor, and diſcretion where to diſtribute it."* At the bottom of this eulogiſtic dedication we cannot but ſuppoſe a ſubſtratum of truth to have lain, ſufficient to evince the cordial welcome which ſo congenial a character as Robert Nelſon would be ſure to receive in her houſe. Swift was for ſome time entertained in her houſehold as chaplain, and would thus be brought himſelf into occaſional contact with him. Eſteem or intimacy it is impoſſible to ſuppoſe between men ſo oppoſite in character and aim of life, as the profane and worldly cleric and the devout layman. And while Swift ſpeaks of Nelſon in terms of reſpect, as "a very pious, learned, and worthy gentleman of the non-juring party,"† Nelſon addreſſes him in language of but diſtant civility when he has occaſion to preſs him for an epitaph that he had promiſed for a tablet that was to be put up to his late patron's memory in Berkeley Church:

"Aſh-Wedneſday, Feb. 22, $17\frac{0}{11}$.‡

"Reverend Sir,—I beg leave to put you in mind of the inſcription which you are to prepare for the Earl of Berkeley's monument. My lady dowager has determined to have it in Latin; ſo that I hope you want no further directions towards the finiſhing of it. The workman calls upon me for it, which is the reaſon of this trouble given you by, "Rev. Sir,

"Your moſt humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson."

But the religious influence which Nelſon exerciſed in the families with which he was connected, will be beſt

* "Swift's Works," vol. viii. p. 79, &c. The nave of St. Dunſtan's, Cranford, was rebuilt by this pious lady in 1716.

† "Works," vol. viii. p. 275.

‡ "Swift's Letters," by Hawkesworth. Vol. i. p. 71. ed. 1767.

exhibited by the two Letters of Advice which he addreſſed to his two young relatives, George and Gabriel Hanger, when leaving England in early life for mercantile employment at Smyrna. All of Nelſon's city connexions (it may be obſerved) were engaged in this trade to the Levant. His own father had made his fortune at Aleppo, and he had himſelf been deſigned to follow a ſimilar employ. "'Tis my earneſt deſire," John Nelſon wrote, "to my wife and executors, that my ſonne may be brought up in the true feare of God, and when fitt, placed with a Turkey merchant, that will ſend him for Aleppo." Sir Gabriel Roberts was deputy governor of the Levant Company, and his brother William a merchant in the trade. George Hanger, the grandfather of the two young men, had raiſed his fortune at Smyrna, and their uncle John was alſo a wealthy trader to the Levant. With the Hanger family Nelſon had been intimate from his boyhood. He had reſided for ſome years, it will be remembered, at his aunt Hanger's manſion of Dryfield, when receiving inſtruction from Dr. Bull. With her ſon George, then a lad of his own age, he maintained, throughout after life, in ſpite of their differing politics—for George Hanger was as earneſt a partiſan of the Revolution as Nelſon was of the exiled family, chriſtening his children William and Mary, and being knighted by the reigning ſovereign for his zeal in his behalf: —with this Whig couſin he ſtill maintained the intimacy which they may have contracted in their youth, entruſting to him at laſt the charitable diſpoſition of his eſtate as one of the executors to his will. And when his eldeſt ſon George left England, at about ſeventeen years of age, to follow his hereditary profeſſion at Smyrna, Robert Nelſon, who was his godfather, ſupplied him for his ſtay abroad with a parcel of religious books, and addreſſed to him the following admirable letter of advice; which, with the exception of a paragraph where his nonjuring doctrine of

passive obedience appears, forms as excellent a guide for life as could now be placed in a young man's hand :—

*To George Hanger, Esq.**

"Dear Cousin,—Your father having designed to send you for Turkey by the next ships bound to those parts, and intending thereby to breed you to business; that you may be enabled to advance your own fortune in the world, and to assist your brothers when they shall be fit to receive the advantages of your kindness; I cannot forbear commending that readiness of mind you have shown on this occasion to comply with that scheme which your father, on mature deliberation, with the advice of your best friends, has formed for the employment of your youth. So near a relation can never want kindness to design that which is best for you; and the advantages of his good sense and great experience enable him to judge right in this matter; so that, being governed by the dictates of so kind and wise a father, you steer by a much surer compass, than by following the suggestions of your own thoughts, which must want due ripeness in that path of life you now tread. I look upon this first step of your conduct to be a happy presage of your future wisdom and steadiness; and a good omen that your voyage of life will be prosperous and successful; for the miscarriage of many a youth has been owing to his own wilfulness and obstinacy; refusing the advice and guidance of his best friends when he stood most in want of it. Being therefore, Sir, determined to travel, by your father's appointment, and by your own prudent consent, I thought myself obliged to give you some advice in relation to your future conduct; and you ought to bear with me the rather in this matter, because I have had some share in the care of your education. Besides, the character of a godfather entitles me to some [extent] to prescribe to you; but whether any of these reasons would have prevailed upon me, if I had not felt a particular love and kindness for you, I know not. I am sure the liberty I am now about to take proceeds from a sincere and hearty concern

* Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes," vol. iv. p. 200, &c.

This letter is in the Bodleian

for your future welfare; and upon that ground, therefore, I hope it will be agreeable and acceptable to you.

"1. In the firſt place, I muſt beg you often to reflect upon the great end for which you were ſent into the world; which was, not to ſport away your time in pleaſure, nor only to get a fair eſtate; but to fit and prepare yourſelf for a happy eternity, in the enjoyment of God by a conſtant and univerſal obedience to all His holy laws; in compariſon of which, all the labours of life are mere trifles. My reaſon for giving you this hint is, that, by having your chief buſineſs always in your view, you may be continually upon your guard; ſo that neither the pleaſures nor buſineſs of life, nor the deſires of growing rich, may ever cauſe you to forget that you are a ſtranger upon earth, and that your days are as a ſhadow which will ſoon paſs away.

"2. In the ſecond place, you muſt endeavour that this great end be proſecuted ſteadily and vigorouſly, by all thoſe ways and means which God has eſtabliſhed for the working out your ſalvation. You muſt reſolve upon a holy and virtuous life, if ever you pretend to attain that happineſs which God has promiſed. All other ways of getting to Heaven are fallacious; and will in the end deceive you, if ever you are ſo unhappy as to truſt to them; for *without holineſs no man ſhall ſee the Lord.* Now the virtue and holineſs I mean, are of a large extent; and comprehend your duty to God, your neighbour, and yourſelf; and is what the Apoſtle calls living *righteouſly*, *ſoberly*, *and godly in this preſent world.* In order to this purpoſe, God has given us His holy word to inſtruct us in the particulars of our duty; which, therefore, you muſt frequently peruſe with great application of mind. He has, moreover, encouraged our addreſſes to Him, by promiſing to hear our prayers; which we muſt therefore offer to Him in our cloſets, and in the public congregations, that we may receive ſtrength and power from above, to perform our duty. He has farther inſtituted the Holy Sacrament, to be a continual memorial of the ſacrifice of Chriſt's death, to convey to us the benefits of his ſufferings; therefore, if you ſincerely deſire the pardon of your ſins, grace and aſſiſtance to conquer them, and to make a progreſs in all

virtue, you must frequently approach the altar, where these blessings are to be found; and indeed a man must have but very slight notions of the benefits of Christ's death, that refuses to give this easy testimony of a thankful heart. You must frequently examine yourself, that you may exercise repentance where you may fall short of your duty, and that you may thank God where you have been enabled to perform it; you must accustom yourself to meditate upon such divine subjects as occur in the course of your reading, that you may stir up all the faculties of your soul to a vigorous prosecution of them. The aforementioned means of grace are not to be rested in as the substance of religion, but are to be used as necessary to beget in us true piety and virtue; and except we aim at that in the use of them, they will not be acceptable to God. A man may be a bad man, and frequent them; and yet there is no being good without them, when the providence of God gives us the opportunity to enjoy them.

"3. In the third place, I must desire you, as much as you can, to live by rule and method; to divide the day into such proportions, that a proper time may be assigned for all your actions; that the hours of your devotion, of your business, and your diversions, may all be stated; thus time will not lie upon your hands, nor sting you with regret when past. While you are subject to the commands of others, you must be content to have your hours of business regulated by them; these you will quickly be acquainted with; and what are left to your own disposal, must be employed partly in your prayers, in reading good books, and such as are otherwise commendable, both French and Latin, that you may not lose those languages you have taken so much pains to acquire.

"4. In the fourth place, I must advise you to diligence and industry in your business, which is the best method to make it succeed. 'Seest thou a man,' says Solomon, 'diligent in his business, he shall stand before princes.' The wisdom of man is distinguished by using proper and fit means to attain his end. Therefore, as you are concerned to support that character, and desire to bring to perfection what you project, you must never be careless

and negligent in thoſe things committed to your truſt and management; for this is even to offend againſt the duties of religion.

"5. In the fifth place, ſince trade and commerce are pitched upon for your employments, never deviate from exact juſtice and uprightneſs in all your dealings. Every particular circumſtance of life has its particular temptation; and a man that ſincerely deſigns his duty, will put his guard on that place where the greateſt danger is apprehended. Frequent dealings with others preſent to us as frequent opportunities of over-reaching them; and the more a man is truſted, the better he is able to play the knave. Now, though I think as to this world, that honeſty is the beſt method of thriving, becauſe it ſecures credit and reputation, which are the main inſtruments of trade and commerce; yet there are ſome opportunities of unrighteous gain, that require good principles of religion to keep a man right. Remember always that no repentance will make our peace with God for ill-gotten goods without reſtitution; which makes that neceſſary work difficult and irkſome:—that, whatever varniſh we are able to put upon our injuſtice before men, yet God ſees through the whole deceit, and will one day judge us for it; and it contradicts the great rule laid down by our Saviour, of doing to others as we would they ſhould do unto us.

"6. In the ſixth place, I muſt not forget to enjoin you to take care to beware of covetouſneſs, becauſe the love of money is the root of all evil; and it is a ſecret poiſon, which deſtroys the ſouls of ſuch men who otherwiſe appear ſober and virtuous. Beſides, this is a vice particularly incident to thoſe that get eſtates by their own induſtry, and therefore it is the more neceſſary to give you warning of it. Be not, therefore, over-eager in the purſuit of riches; and when they increaſe, ſet not your heart upon them. To acquire them by unjuſt means, is the perfection of covetouſneſs; but this vice lurks in many other actions leſs notorious; as, when a man purſues the world to the neglect of the duties of religion, even of prayer in his cloſet and family; when his mind is always anxious about the ſucceſs of his projects; when the poor have no ſhare of his gains; when

he is ſordid, and cannot find in his heart to enjoy moderately what he poſſeſſes, or, if he does, ſpends it upon his luſts; and when he makes riches his truſt and confidence. Now the love of this world is enmity againſt God, and does as effectually debar us from heaven, as all the extravagancies of lewdneſs and debauchery.

"7. In the ſeventh place, I muſt put you in mind of keeping good company, by which I mean chiefly men of pious and virtuous diſpoſitions; though, with theſe qualifications, it may be extended to thoſe of the beſt rank and quality where you reſide, from whom you will be able to learn more than from thoſe of an inferior education. And it is often ſeen that a young gentleman, newly come into the world, is more frequently ruined by mean and inferior company, than by converſing with his ſuperiors, for whom having a deference, he becomes more modeſt and humble in his behaviour; whereas when he finds himſelf the top of the company, it diſpoſes him to pride and vanity. It is difficult for thoſe whoſe circumſtances throw them into a great deal of company, always to avoid that which is bad; and charity may ſometimes oblige men to converſe with ſuch, in order to their reformation, were there any probable hopes of making bad men better. But it is in every man's power to chuſe what perſons he deſigns for friendſhip and frequent converſation; a matter of that importance, that it requires time and ſerious deliberation before you engage. Men of no principles of religion are not to be relied upon, having no foundation to ſupport friendſhip; beſides, they may be apt to infect you with ſcepticiſm; and men who believe religion, and act contrary to their principles, give but a ſcurvy proof of their ſincerity, and by their bad example may inſenſibly corrupt your morals. Thoſe we love have a mighty influence over us; therefore let not a wicked man become your intimate.

"8. In the eighth place, I muſt adviſe you to obſtinate temperance in drinking, the beſt method to preſerve health, and a virtue ſtrictly enjoined by the Chriſtian religion. There is no young man that converſes in the world, but who is more or leſs expoſed to this temptation; but your particular ſituation of Smyrna, by reaſon of the frequent

arrival of ſhips, will make it difficult for you not to exceed the Chriſtian meaſure, except you arm yourſelf with great reſolution. Never think it a piece of manhood to be drunk yourſelf, or to make others ſo; for this is to diſtinguiſh yourſelf by what is the deprivation of manhood, extinguiſhing at once both your ſenſe and reaſon; beſides, it will make you liable to many unfortunate accidents. A debauch has brought many a fever, which has ended in death; has occaſioned the breaking of many a limb, which is not recovered without pain and charge; and how many have broke their necks on ſuch occaſions, and ſo gone out of the world without repenting of ſo great a crime! Sometimes it creates quarrels, which have coſt the life of one or both the diſputants. But, if you eſcape theſe dangers that affect the body, your beſt part, your ſoul, muſt ſuffer by ſo plain a breach of your duty, till you reconcile yourſelf to God by unfeigned repentance. Never reckon an exceſs in drinking a ſmall fault, a *pecadiglio*, for this may prevail upon you to comply with the importunity of others; it is certainly a breach of God's laws, and you muſt count nothing inconſiderable that offends Him. Be free to own your weakneſs as to drinking; that it prejudices your health, and that you are not able to bear ſo much as others; and then, if the company have any good manners, they will not preſs you. When you entertain friends yourſelf, introduce coffee and tea after dinner, and propoſe ſome diverſion, that drinking may be hindered. Several little arts a man will call to his aſſiſtance, that deſigns to keep himſelf and the company ſober. But then, if you are at any time ſurpriſed, immediately next day teſtify your repentance, profeſs your ſorrow to God, and reſolve on more firmneſs for the time to come; if your companions ſhould make a jeſt of it, let them know it is no jeſting matter. And I think you would do well, if you puniſhed yourſelf for ſo unfortunate an accident, by impoſing upon yourſelf a day of faſting, or by abſtaining from the uſe of wine for two or three days.

"9. In the ninth place, I muſt caution you againſt uncleanneſs, ſo frequent a failure in youth,* and which, when

* That a youth about to ſettle at Smyrna, ſtood in need of ſuch advices will

once indulged, will corrupt the beſt principles, and has carried many a man to ſcepticiſm and infidelity; becauſe, when a man cannot reconcile his conſtant practice to the laws of religion, he caſts about how to get rid of the obligation of ſuch laws, which bear ſo hard upon him, and give him ſo much uneaſineſs. Now the beſt rule in this caſe is, never to indulge the leaſt appearance of this vice, to diſcourage all looſe and wanton thoughts which may ariſe in your mind, to forbear all obſcene and filthy diſcourſe, to avoid all familiarity with the fair ſex, not to ſeem pleaſed with others' attempts to divert the company by lewd jeſts, to be modeſt towards yourſelf, and to treat yourſelf with reverence and reſpect. For chaſtity conſiſts in a due government of thoſe appetites which God has placed in us for the propagating of mankind; which are never to be gratified but in a ſtate of matrimony; ſo that anything that tends to provoke theſe appetites out of that ſtate, by our own voluntary conſent, has a ſhare of the guilt of the laſt act, and is what we muſt be accountable for, and therefore ought carefully to be watched againſt. If you ever give yourſelf up to this vice, you will expoſe your conſtitution to great ſhocks, make your body the ſink of many noiſome diſeaſes, conſume your eſtate, neglect your buſineſs, and bring contempt upon you from all ſober people; it will harden you againſt all good advice, provoke the wrath of God, and infallibly draw upon you in the next world the miſeries of a ſad eternity.

"10. In the tenth place, guard yourſelf from the bane of converſation which is evil-ſpeaking. This leſſening the reputation of others by expoſing their faults is grown ſo common, that, more or leſs, even good people ſplit upon

appear from the following extract from a letter of the Board of the Levant Company in London, dated 10 Aug. 1703, addreſſed to the Factory at Smyrna:—"We are now to admoniſh ſome among you, who by a notorious and diſſolute courſe of life, as to women, are become a diſhonor to our religion, a ſcandal to our nation, and an ill example to others, beſides the danger that attends on eſtates thereby; aſſuring ſuch as are concerned that if this caution and good admonition doth not take effect with them to reform their wicked practices, we ſhall take ſuch further courſe as will not be pleaſing to them, and remove ſuch diſſolute perſons out of our privileges. But as we hope the greater part of you have maintained the probity and virtue of honeſt men and good Chriſtians, ſo we recommend you always to continue the ſame."

the rock; ſo that if you have not a particular watch over yourſelf, you will be carried down the ſtream, and become involved in this common calamity. Some people never examine the truth of what they report, provided it was told them; but this is calumny and ſlander; and if they know what they ſay to be true, yet if neither juſtice nor charity require the diſcovery, it is the vice of evil-ſpeaking, forbid by the Chriſtian religion; for, when there is no juſtifiable reaſon to the contrary, we ought to throw a veil over the faults of our neighbour, for this is the treatment we deſire from them: we are not willing what is true of ourſelves ſhould be expoſed to public view; beſides, it is contrary to that love which is due to our neighbour, which, when ſincere, will diſpoſe us to cover thoſe defects that may tend to the impairing of his reputation. Now, the more you mortify the evil paſſions of pride, envy, and revenge, the leſs you will be ſubject to diſtraction,* which very often proceeds from them. An over-buſy meddling temper will expoſe you to the ſame temptation; but, if you would entirely ſecure yourſelf, reſolve never to ſpeak ill of any one. Do not ſuffer yourſelf to repeat ſtories to the diſadvantage of others, though never ſo public; for, though this on ſome occaſions might be innocently done, yet by degrees it may inſenſibly betray you to real defamation.

"11. In the eleventh place, I muſt give you a great charge, not to ſuffer yourſelf to be infected with the common vice of ſwearing. You will find yourſelf tempted to this unreaſonable ſin by the practice of all nations, who agree in no evil more univerſally than this. But remember, that an honeſt man's word ſhould be eſteemed ſo ſacred, that he ſhould have no occaſion to confirm what he ſays by an oath; beſides, the reverence of a ſolemn appeal to God, being diminiſhed by common ſwearing, leads a man to perjury, a moſt confirmed piece of iniquity. It is plainly and directly forbid by the Chriſtian religion; and the corruption of our nature ſuggeſts the feweſt temptations to it of any vice whatever; which makes the practice of cuſtomary ſwearing more inexcuſable. Avoid the company of common ſwearers, for converſing frequently with them will abate

* Query, detraction.

that horror we have at first for the rash and common use of oaths. If I mistake not, you have been preserved hitherto from this corruption; but let not the greatness or genteelness of those that practise it ever betray you to any good opinion of it. You must not imitate the best-bred men by their vices, which are no part of their good-breeding.

"12. In the twelfth place remember to be courteous and affable towards all men; they who exclude civility out of the catalogue of virtues seem to me not thoroughly to understand the nature of Christianity. By this method you will preserve the good will of those you converse with, which will make them the readier to serve you upon all occasions, and by degrees give you power to do them good in matters of the greatest importance. In time it will bring you to a habit of self-denial; for this affability will often make you forego what you like best, in indifferent things, in order to please and oblige others; and it is no inconsiderable talent to be ready upon all occasions to contradict our own wills; besides, it is part of that charity we owe to our neighbours, to whom we are obliged to do good by all the means that lie in our power; and certainly every man is delighted and pleased in being well used.

"13. In the thirteenth place, I must particularly recommend to you the practice of charity; by which I mean doing good to the souls and bodies of men. It is true, God has set apart a particular order of men to be useful and serviceable to others in the great affair of their salvation, and there are several holy actions which are peculiar to the priests of the Lord, which for a layman to invade would be sacrilege. But there are some others which are common to both; every man may instruct his children and servants in the principles of religion, and reprove others when they transgress, and upon fit occasions insinuate exhortations to piety; nay, I think it their duty so to do. But, if my children or servants want baptism, I must call for a minister; if I would have them confirmed, I must carry them to a bishop, to lay his hands on them, and bless them; if they would receive the holy sacrament, or absolution for any sin that troubles their consciences, I must apply to the priests that wait at the altar; if I would

conſecrate a child to the ſervice of the Church, I muſt deſire a biſhop to ordain him, becauſe they only are intruſted with that power. But when you have ſervants, endeavour to inſtruct them in neceſſary Chriſtian knowledge; lead them by your repeated advice, as well as example, in the practice of religion; comfort your friends that mourn and are afflicted, with ſeasonable diſcourſes of piety; and reprove prudently and gently all your companions when you find they tranſgreſs God's laws. But never unneceſſarily vex or grieve any man's mind, for thereby you hurt his ſoul. As to their bodies, you muſt, according to your abilities, relieve their wants, and ſupply their neceſſities; and, in order to this purpoſe, I muſt ſuggeſt to you what I take to be a prudent management; which is to dedicate and lay apart a proportion of your gains or your income, when it is certain, for alms-deeds; which will make the work eaſy and delightful, and you moreover ready to embrace any opportunity that offers for doing good, becauſe you are before-hand provided with the means. The ways of exerciſing this ſort of charity are as various as thoſe wants the body labours under; as feeding the hungry, cloathing the naked, viſiting the ſick, and thoſe in priſon; redeeming thoſe in ſlavery and captivity; and comforting ſuch as are under any oppreſſion. Theſe good works, according to your ability, the Chriſtian religion obliges you to; you are further provoked to them by the example of our Lord and Saviour, who went about doing good; and at the day of judgment the particular inquiry will run upon theſe heads which I have mentioned, as you may ſee in the xxvth of St. Matthew, and the reward or puniſhment will then be aſſigned according to thoſe rules.

"14. In the fourteenth place, I muſt caution you againſt gaming; hoping it will never make any conſiderable part of your diverſion. When once it is loved, it conſumes a great deal of time, which is too precious to be thrown away at that rate; the night by this means is turned into day, and the day into night. When men play deep, they venture the ruining of themſelves, or at leaſt win from others what ſhould maintain their families; which cannot be juſtified. This has ſo inverted the order of the world,

that it hath brought footmen into coaches, and has made them walk on foot that before kept them. It raiſes all thoſe paſſions which it is the buſineſs of Chriſtians to ſubdue, and often creates ſuch paſſions as end in murder. If you ſhould ſometimes divert yourſelf this way, avoid games of chance, for they are the moſt bewitching, and the leaſt under government; and when you play at games of ſkill, never ſit too long at them, nor venture much money, nor engage with ſuch as are violently paſſionate. I wiſh in your diverſions you would aim at health as well as pleaſure; which you may reap from walking, riding, ſhooting, or bowling; always remembering that diverſions are for refreſhment, not for an employment.

"15. In the fifteenth place, I muſt preſs upon you the conſtant uſe of the means of grace; ſuch as are prayer, reading the Holy Scriptures, receiving the bleſſed ſacrament, ſelf-examination, meditation, obſervation of the Lord's Day, and other Feaſts and Faſts of the Church. Some men deceive themſelves, indeed, by placing all religion in theſe performances; and ſome, on the other hand, deceive themſelves by thinking they are above them; but, if you really deſign the end, which is piety, and virtue, and holineſs in all your converſation, you muſt make uſe of thoſe means, and that frequently, which God has preſcribed for that purpoſe. You may as well pretend to grow rich without diligence and induſtry, as to be truly good without praying and receiving the ſacrament, &c.

"The grace of God is neceſſary, to enable us to do every thing that is good, and to ſtrengthen us in reſiſting every thing that is evil; and how can we ever hope for ſuch neceſſary and powerful aſſiſtance, except we ſeek for it in the ways of God's appointment? I muſt therefore entreat you to be conſtant to your morning and evening devotions in your cloſet, to perform them with great ſeriouſneſs and application of mind, remembering always that Great Majeſty to whom you addreſs; and at ſuch times it will be very uſeful to read ſome portions of the Scripture, eſpecially if you conſult ſome good paraphraſe or comment upon it. Take all opportunities that are conſiſtent with your buſineſs of attending the public prayers,

which are moſt acceptable to God, as tending moſt to his glory; and always upon ſuch occaſions behave yourſelf with great reverence and devotion, conſidering that you are, after a peculiar manner in the preſence of God. Stand, ſit, or kneel, as the Church directs in her rubricks; never talk nor gaze about in the church, as it is too common, to the great ſcandal of Chriſtians; endeavour to correct this ill cuſtom by a contrary carriage, that your example may rebuke and reprove ſuch careleſs and negligent worſhippers. Never turn your back upon the holy communion: when all things are prepared for the celebration of the holy myſteries, let no pretence of your own unpreparedneſs excuſe your attendance. If you live, and I hope you will, as it becomes a Chriſtian, you can very ſeldom have a juſt reaſon for your abſence. 'Draw near,' therefore, to the holy table with great humility and devotion, 'and take the holy ſacrament to your comfort.' The opportunities of receiving abroad offer but rarely; which makes it very inexcuſable if ever you omit any that preſent themſelves. Pay a particular regard to the Lord's Day, commonly called Sunday; diſtinguiſh it as much by your practice, as it is by divine inſtitution; attend the ſolemnities of religion in public at ſuch times; this I look upon as of indiſpenſable obligation, and not to be omitted but in caſes of great neceſſity. Let the reſt of the day be dedicated to pious and devout employments. This ſeems peculiarly neceſſary to men of buſineſs and traffic; becauſe, being intent all the week long upon their worldly concerns, they really ſtand in need of recollection and retirement for the improvement of their minds, which the circumſtances of Sunday are very proper to promote. Not that I would have you ſuperſtitious in the obſervance of it, making that abſolutely neceſſary which is neceſſary only as a means; and, therefore, when you are accidentally by company prevented in your method, grow not ſullen and moroſe; rather endeavour to ſeaſon the converſation with hints of piety; and dexterouſly introduce ſuch topicks of diſcourſe as make the converſation ſuitable to the day; but, if poſſible, let not company deprive you of thoſe advantages you may receive from retirement at ſuch times. You muſt

needs think that I reckon the obſervation of the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of great advantage to the Chriſtian life, or elſe I ſhould not have troubled the world with ſo large a book upon that ſubject: to which I refer you for my thoughts in that matter; deſiring you to read a chapter in it, as the particular days occur, throughout the whole year. As to ſelf-examination, the oftener you perform it, the leſs trouble and time it will take up; ſo that, if you would accuſtom yourſelf to recollection every evening before you ſay your prayers, you would eaſily know the ſtate of your mind, by running over the actions of the day paſt; which would diſcover any falſe ſtep that you had made, and which required a particular repentance.

"Never delay this work beyond once a week; you may chooſe Sunday for that purpoſe, as the time you are ſureſt to command. Keeping accounts fair and clear has a great efficacy in our ſpiritual affairs as in our temporal and worldly concerns. When you read any book upon a religious ſubject, accuſtom yourſelf to reflect upon what you have read, that you may perceive whether it enlightens your underſtanding, or influences your will, or warms your affections; for the buſineſs of meditation is, to digeſt that ſpiritual nouriſhment we take in by reading; without this practice, much learning and reading turns to little account. I have provided you with a collection of books, from which I am ſure you may be thoroughly inſtructed in all neceſſary Chriſtian knowledge; excited to the practice of all Chriſtian graces and inſtitutions; and furniſhed for the exerciſe of that devotion that is neceſſary for you, in private and in public, upon moſt of the occurrences in life; but I muſt freely tell you that theſe books will not work as charms; if they ſerve but for the ornament of your cloſet, they will only adminiſter to vanity. They muſt be read attentively, and ſeriouſly conſidered, if you deſign that advantage I have aimed at in making the collection. There is one thing I muſt obſerve to you before I conclude this head, that, by reading Archbiſhop Tillotſon's works with care and obſervation, you will not only learn true notions of religion, but alſo the way and manner of writing Engliſh correctly and purely; his ſtyle I take to be the beſt ſtandard

of the Engliſh language; therefore, if you would perfect yourſelf in what is ſo neceſſary for a gentleman and a man of buſineſs, I mean writing well, obſerve his phraſes, and the propriety with which he uſes words, and the clearneſs with which he expreſſes himſelf on all ſubjects.

"16. In the ſixteenth place, I cannot conclude theſe particular heads without putting you in mind of being conſtant to the communion of the Church of England. Abroad you may meet with ſolicitations to popery; but the Church of Rome very falſely pretends to be the Catholic Church; at beſt ſhe can only arrive to be a very corrupt part of it. At home you may be tempted to countenance the ſeparation; but you cannot communicate with the diſſenters without incurring the guilt of ſchiſm. The Church of England not only believes the Scriptures to be the rule of faith, but profeſſes her faith in all thoſe ancient forms of words called creeds, which the primitive Church made uſe of; to which the Church of Rome has made great additions, and requires her novelties to be believed as neceſſary articles of faith; though the Scriptures and primitive antiquity are ſilent concerning them, and in ſome points expreſſly againſt them. Their errors in doctrine are aggravated by conſiderable corruptions in her public offices; which are not only in an unknown tongue, and conſequently no way edifying to the people, but are in ſome parts addreſſed to ſaints and angels, contrary to Scripture and the practice of the primitive Church. And yet farther, ſhe has eſtabliſhed an abſolute monarchy in the Church, by cloathing the Biſhop of Rome, commonly called the Pope, with ſuch prerogatives as are inconſiſtent with the rights of other biſhops, which are eſtabliſhed by divine right. The Church of England, moreover, preſerves the three orders of biſhops, prieſts, and deacons, in a due ſubordination, as inſtituted by our Saviour and His Apoſtles; whereby ſhe is ſecured of a right and truly canonical miniſtry, and conſequently her people furniſhed with valid ſacraments. Now, the diſſenters have rejected this divine ſubordination of church officers; and, by throwing off epiſcopacy, as their miniſters have no lawful commiſſion, ſo their people cannot be aſſured of the validity of ordinances adminiſtered by ſuch teachers. So

that you ſee, in one communion, errors in faith corrupt the doctrine of the Church; and, in the other communion, errors in polity and government deſtroy the unity of it; both which endanger ſalvation; and therefore I recommend to you the Church of England with greater earneſtneſs, becauſe free from both theſe fatal inconveniences. There is another thing wherein the Church of England has gloried as her particular characteriſtic; that ſhe teaches ſincere obedience and uncorrupted loyalty to princes; that we ought to pay them that obedience our conſtitution requires, and upon no pretence whatever to reſiſt them by taking up arms againſt them, which is what is called rebellion. This her homilies teach, which contain good and wholeſome doctrine; and this the laws of the land bind firmly upon us; for they place the power of the ſword in the king, and no man can draw it but by commiſſion from him. (See the Militia Act of Charles II.) And if ſubjects have never ſo good reaſon to take up arms againſt the crown, if for want of ſucceſs they ever come to a fair trial according to the laws, they muſt be found guilty of high treaſon, their own friends being upon their jury. The laws are ſo plain in this caſe that they have afforded no manner of remedy to the ſubject in thoſe extraordinary caſes that are urged. So that non-reſiſtance and paſſive obedience is the doctrine of the Church and ſtate. I am ſure the primitive Chriſtians profeſſed it, even when they felt the bad effects of it in this world, by ſuffering wrongfully, contrary to the laws of the ſtate, and even to the rights of human nature. The Papiſts and Preſbyterians have been both tardy in this point; and I wiſh the practice of ſome in the Church of England had been more blameleſs; but, as long as her homilies and her laws continue unaltered, it cannot be ſaid that either Church or ſtate avows ſuch doctrines. But theſe differences between the Church of England, the Roman Catholics, and Diſſenters, and the other ſubjects I have hinted to you in this letter, are largely explained in thoſe books I have recommended to your peruſal; and therefore I ſhall add no more concerning them.

"I muſt only put you in mind, that, by converſing with thoſe that are ſtrangers to the name of Chriſt, you are under

a more particular obligation of living according to the maxims and rules of the Goſpel; for otherwiſe you will bring a ſcandal upon the Chriſtian religion, and expoſe the doctrine as well as the perſon of the bleſſed Jeſus to the ſcorn and contempt of Mahometans and heathens; and woe be to that man by whom offences come!

"As to the particular rules that relate to travelling, you will have no occaſion for them at preſent; becauſe you are to go by ſea to Smyrna, where you are like to reſide for ſome time. It is very probable, your return may be through Italy and France; or at leaſt I wiſh you may take thoſe countries in your way home; and by that time your own good underſtanding will be ſo ripened by experience that you will be ſufficiently able to guide and direct yourſelf. I will, however, ſuggeſt to you a few thoughts on that matter before I conclude.

"1. Firſt, never ſet yourſelf to find fault with the different cuſtoms of other countries. This certainly proves you to be a novice, and is the ſureſt method to diſoblige the natives, whoſe friendſhip and kindneſs you ſtand in need of. It is your buſineſs, indeed, among other things, to obſerve their cuſtoms, that you may compare them with your own, in order to conſider on which ſide the advantage lies. But if you have reaſon to prefer your own, never treat their's with ſcorn and contempt; for this reflects upon thoſe that uſe them, and will certainly provoke their indignation againſt you; it will make them deſpiſe you, ſhun your company, and deprive you of the advantages you might receive from their converſation. And notwithſtanding the unreaſonableneſs of this practice, nothing is more common among young travellers, and therefore fit to be hinted at.

"2. Secondly, I muſt carry you a ſtep farther; which is, to conform yourſelf as much as you can to the cuſtoms of thoſe with whom you reſide. All mankind are fond of their own ways and methods of living; and as they think themſelves wiſer than others, ſo conſequently they determine their own cuſtoms to be beſt. Now, your giving into their ways and manners flatters their ſelf-love, and will incline them to be deſirous to oblige you; beſides they will have a better opinion of your underſtanding, when you

approve of what they have eſtabliſhed. This will raiſe your character; and according as they value and eſteem you, ſo in proportion you will receive the teſtimonies of their kindneſs and reſpect. Beſides, I cannot tell but that in this method you may beſt preſerve your health; for different climates require different managements; and it is to be ſuppoſed, that the long experience of the natives muſt have found out that regimen which beſt ſecures health. I am very ſure, gentlemen have deſtroyed themſelves by eating fleſh and drinking wine with the ſame freedom in hot countries as they have been accuſtomed to in their own colder climes; and therefore could not forbear giving you this direction.

"3. Thirdly, endeavour to be acquainted with men of the beſt character in all the countries through which you paſs; by which I chiefly mean men diſtinguiſhed for learning, wiſdom, and virtue; from whoſe converſation your mind will receive the greateſt improvement, and from whom you will learn what is fitteſt to be ſeen, and what is moſt proper in that place to entertain the curioſity of a ſtranger. Beſides, their acquaintance will procure you reſpect from others; for, being obſerved to frequent ſuch men, it will be imagined that you have ſome of thoſe good qualities yourſelf which you admire in others. But this advice does not only refer to wiſe and learned men, but alſo to thoſe of the beſt rank and quality, who in all countries are moſt poliſhed in their manners and behaviour; ſo that you will never be able to make a true judgment of any country, if you do not know how people of quality live, as well as thoſe of the middle and inferior rank. Strangers generally employ themſelves more in ſeeing ſights and rarities, than in knowing men; but, as the firſt ſhould not be neglected, ſo in travelling the greateſt ſtreſs ſhould be laid upon the latter; which the want of knowing the language of the place often prevents, and therefore a traveller ſhould make it his buſineſs to be perfect in the language of the place, without which it is impoſſible he can make any great improvements.

"But be ſure, while you are intent upon acquiring ornaments of good breeding, never forget nor forfeit thoſe

qualifications that conſtitute the good Chriſtian. Firſt, take care to be a good man, and then you cannot be too fine a gentleman; when you have ſecured *the pearl of great price*, you will do very well to ſet it to the beſt advantage.

"And becauſe I am ſenſible of the great weakneſs of human nature, and of the ſtrength of thoſe temptations you may meet with, to the advice I have given you, I ſhall add my hearty prayers to God,

"That His grace may conſtantly accompany you; that by His holy inſpiration you may think thoſe things that are good, and that by His merciful guiding you may perform the ſame; that your life may be long and happy; that proſperity may never corrupt you, and that affliction may always make you better; and that all your ways may be diſpoſed towards the attainment of everlaſting ſalvation; that, among all the changes and chances of this mortal life, you may ever be defended by God's moſt gracious and ready help, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord; to which well-weighed petitions of the Church, a moſt hearty Amen is affixed by,

"Dear Couſin,

"Your moſt faithful friend, and humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson."

"27th July, 1708."

When George Hanger's younger brother Gabriel left England for a ſimilar purpoſe, a few years later, Nelſon addreſſed to him alſo the following ſhorter epiſtle.*

To Mr. Gabriel Hanger.

"Dear Cousin,—The beſt method I can contrive of ſhowing my concern for you at preſent is, to furniſh you with a copy of that letter which I wrote to your eldeſt brother upon his leaving England, becauſe it contains ſome rules which may be of uſe to you in the conduct of a Chriſtian life. Your caſe and his are ſo far alike, that you both leave your own country, and are, by the deſignation of your beſt friend, your father, ſettled in a way of merchandiſe, whereby, by God's bleſſing upon your own induſtry, you

* Nichols' Lit. Anec, vol. iv. p. 220 et seqq.

may both very probably raiſe a conſiderable fortune, prove uſeful members of the commowealth, and make others happy in ſharing your plenty and abundance. From this ſimilitude of circumſtances will ariſe an agreement in thoſe temptations which it is likely may attack you both; and therefore what I thought proper to ſay to him you may very well apply to yourſelf; and thus far I may anſwer, that, if you take care to practiſe what is there ſuggeſted, you will not fail of recommending yourſelf to all thoſe in whoſe power it is to advance your intereſt; but, what is more conſiderable, you will thereby ſecure the favour of Almighty God, whoſe bleſſing is neceſſary to ſucceed in all your undertakings, and who alone can beſtow upon you a happineſs that is laſting and durable, which he has reſerved in heaven for all thoſe who truly love and fear him. You muſt needs be ſenſible what care and expence your father has been at in your education, to fit you for the employment you engage in; you know very well what charge he has beſtowed to equip you for this voyage, and how ready he has been to gratify you in everything you could either aſk or deſire of him, in order to your pleaſure and profit. Now, all this adds freſh obligations to your duty; and what returns can you make for ſo much kindneſs, which will pleaſe him better than your ſteady ſobriety and your conſtant application to your buſineſs? Theſe are ſuch injunctions as are neceſſary to your own welfare; and yet he will eſteem them a full compenſation for that paternal affection which he has ſhowed towards you. And how much more pleaſant and comfortable it is to be the joy of your parents by your prudent and Chriſtian behaviour, than to increaſe thoſe cares you have already neceſſarily given them? for you cannot indulge any extravagant and diſorderly courſe without oppreſſing their minds with ſorrow and grief, in a time of life when they are leaſt able to bear it.

"This argument of pleaſing your beſt friends ſhould have a great influence upon an ingenuous mind; and I am willing to think you have a great ſenſe of gratitude; and that, by conſidering what has been done for you, may excite a great ardour and fervency in your mind, to anſwer the expectations of thoſe to whom you are ſo dear.

"But, Sir, I must tell you one thing more, that, by governing yourself according to the scheme of the foregoing letter, you most truly consult your own interest, which influences every man that is not corrupted by present pleasure to forfeit a future good. So that, if any regard to your happiness, as well as that of your parents, can prevail upon you, we shall certainly hear that you are upright and diligent in your business, sober and temperate in your enjoyments, and pious and religious in your whole conversation.

"I am very glad you have been confirmed; whereby your Christianity is become your own deliberate choice, the care of your godfathers and godmothers is discharged, and you have before God and man engaged to perform your part of the baptismal covenant.

"In order to discharge this more effectually, you have been admitted to the holy table, where God dispenses larger measures of His grace to those who approach with sincere intentions of doing their duty; and therefore I hope, now you have been initiated into the Christian mysteries, you will never neglect such opportunities which Providence may supply you with for the celebration of them.*

"I have nothing more to add but my hearty prayers to God, that He would be pleased to prosper your voyage, and bring you in safety to your desired port, since in all your ways you acknowledge him; and that he would direct your paths, and teach you to guide your affairs with discretion; that he would never leave you nor forsake you, but conduct you safely by His counsel through all the businesses and enjoyments, through all the temptations and troubles of this life, to that blessed place where our Lord Jesus liveth and reigneth for evermore.

"I am, with great sincerity, dear Cousin,

"Your very faithful humble servant,

"ROBERT NELSON."

"The Epiphany, 1713."

"Remember to be that in health, which you will wish to have been when you come to die."

* The following extract from the letter-book of the Levant Company, will indicate the opportunities of Holy Communion then enjoyed by their servants:

It may be intereſting here to add that Robert Nelſon's prayer and wiſhes for his young relative's ſucceſs in life received in this caſe a complete and happy accompliſhment. Gabriel Hanger returned to England with a large fortune, rebuilt the church of his native place, (1734,) repreſented ſucceſſively Maidſtone and Bridgewater in Parliament, and was raiſed in 1764 to the Iriſh peerage of Coleraine.* A tablet to his memory in Dryfield Church bears the ſevere but modeſt inſcription, apparently dictated by himſelf: "Here lieth, in expectation of the laſt day, Gabriel Hanger, Lord Coleraine. What manner of man he was that day will diſcover. He died Jan. 24. 1773, aged ſeventy-five."

—"1712. Oct 7. Wm. Raye, Eſq., late conſul at Smyrna, deceaſed, having by his will bequeathed a ſervice of communion plate to the chapel at Smyrna for the use of the Factory there, we have ſent the ſame to you by the Sea Horſe; and we recommend to you that all due care be had thereof. We likewiſe ſend you by this opportunity, as an addition to our library, the books deſired by Mr. Lyde."

* His couſin, Ann Hanger, daughter of John Hanger, Eſq., a merchant of London, had married Henry Hare, laſt Lord Coleraine of that line.

CHAPTER VI.

NELSON'S CORRESPONDENTS AND FRIENDS.

The Rev. Dr. Mapletoft.—Six Letters to him.—Humphry Wanley; his connection with Nelson.—Two Letters recommending him to a place in the Paper-office.—The Rev. Dr. Grabe; his opinions and works.—Nelson's character of him.—Two Letters to Lord Oxford respecting him.—Rev. Dr. Charlett, Master of University Coll. Oxon.—Eleven Letters to him.—Letter to Harley on the formation of a Tory Ministry.—Letter of Compliment to the Poet Prior.—Ralph Thoresby, the Yorkshire Antiquary.—Notices of Nelson in his Diary.—Rev. Wm. Reeves, Translator of the early Christian Apologists.—Extracts from his Prefatory Letter to Robert Nelson.—Rev. John Johnson, author of the "Propitiatory Oblation" and the "Unbloody Sacrifice."—Four Letters to him.

In addition to the attachment of his own family and relations, Nelson enjoyed the society of a large circle of admirers and friends, who were drawn to him by personal esteem for his character, or by sympathy in his charitable works. And the letters to his different correspondents, which have been preserved, with the particulars that may be gleaned from other sources, of his intimacy with them, will form a pleasing chapter in the history of his life.

At their head must be placed his old friend Dr. Mapletoft, to whom he addressed the following letters, in addition to those which have been previously quoted.*

"London, the 1st Jan., 9¾.

"My dear friend's affliction† has sensibly touch't me, and I heartily compassionate the severity of it: if I have not told you so sooner, 'twas out of a respectfull indulgence

* "European Magazine," vol. xv. p. 187.

† Mapletoft had recently lost his wife, on the anniversary of their wedding day. Nov. 18, 1693.

to so just a concern; for I think there should be some time allowed to calm our passions, even when our reason is obedient to the dispensation. I can assure you I am a great sharer in your loss, not only from what I knew, but from what I expected in so valuable a neighbour:—but God knows what is best for us, and a cheerful submission to his will is certainly the surest foundation of present ease and satisfaction, as well as the only method to make us eternally happy. I need not go about to prove this proposition to one who has often with great advantage cleared this sacred truth, and has convinced other people of their duty in this particular; but give me leave, good sir, to urge one thing upon you, which is the necessity of confirming your doctrine by your example. We shall be apt to think there is very little force in those arguments our guides comfort us with in affliction, if we find they have not power to support their own spirits in the like sad circumstances; and 'tis no small advantage to the Christian religion, that the blessed Jesus shewed us so perfect an example of what he taught. And you must not think us Laicks unreasonable, if we expect a more perfect vertue from those who have the honour and happiness to attend the altar: you are the light that must shine before us, and the salt wherewith we must be seasoned, and consequently have greater obligations to influence you than we can pretend to. I must confess I little doubt of finding you all of a piece; but since great minds are sometimes shaken, pardon my earnest desire of seeing you fixt upon a rock, and if I am got beyond my sphere, put it upon the score of friendship, and reckon it as an effect of that value and esteem which I have always profest for you. I thank God, after a long illness, my wife is very much recovered, and is rather better in her health than she was before; she talks of returning to Blackheath in February, but I am afraid it may be too soon; but that depends upon the weather. I have sent you this day, by my gardener, a book lately printed, which I am sure was designed by the author to beget a Christian temper under sufferings, which most that fall under have great occasion of. I believe you would hardly have met with it, which made me take the liberty of presenting you. The season of the year oblidges me to wish you all happiness,

but I aſſure you 'tis the conſtant temper of my mind towards you; for I am, with great ſincerity,

"Your moſt affectionate humble Servant,

"NELSON.

"My wife and L. Berkeley are your humble ſervants."

*"August 7th, 1701, B. Heath.

"DEAR SIR.—You conſulted very much the eaſe and ſatisfaction of your friend, by the favourable account I received this day of the welfare of you and your family; and if the preſent pleaſure I feel would admit of any allay, the being without it ſo long might create ſome unquiet reflections. I am not ſurprized with Pony's infirmities. I never laid any great ſtreſs upon his abilities, and have often endeavoured to abate that great value which you put upon him; but experience is a ſurer guide than the uncertain gueſſes of our friends, and to that I ſhall leave you. Mr. Waller would certainly have entertained you very well, for Sir H. Short's letter ſaid a great deal; and before you had parted, you would have convinced him how much you deſerved it. You would have ſeen our mines in a very flouriſhing condition. We have had from thence lately very comfortable news.

"The hot weather we have had has made me often pity you, for that extreme is not to be cured by the aſſiſtance of wit and money, of both which, God be thanked, you want not a ſufficient ſhare. My wife, who always remembers you with great kindneſs and reſpect, has been very much out of order; but the Spaw waters have very much relieved her, which makes her perſiſt in drinking them. I procured Biſhop Fowler 5 guineas more for the aſſiſtance of Mr. Harris, which he took very kindly, and preſſt me to ſet a day to dine with him, that we might not miſs one another. He aſſured me that was the only reaſon; but for all that, he treated me very generouſly, and we had ſix diſhes of meat, beſides a handſome ſervice of fruit. I am very ſenſible of his great kindneſs towards me; and

* "European Magazine," vol. xv. p. 274, 5.

though I have deſerved it from ſome of his order where I have not found it, yet his Lordſhip's (*ſic*) is all grace and favour.

"Your Corporation* has done nothing conſiderable beſides raiſing money to pay the charges of their being a body. Our Society† having a good ſum by them upon this occaſion, we thought we could not do better than diſcharge part of Dr. Bray's debt, to which I took ſome pains to diſpose ſome of our members; and I made it appear 'twas a ſervice to the Society thus to diſpoſe of money that lay by us dead rather than pay intereſt to Dr. Bray, which by this method would be ſaved. I am confident I have your conſent in this matter; and indeed I know not how to anſwer to myſelf that diſcouragement, that worthy zealous perſon finds from ſome of his own order. I am ſure he has been one of the greateſt inſtruments for propagating Chriſtian knowledge this age has produced. The libraries abroad, our Society, and the Corporation, are owing to his unwearied ſolicitations. If you return near my Lord Weymouth's, you may find him and Biſhop Ken both there, and you may be ſure of a good reception from ſuch a lord.

"Our neighbour Stanhope was delivered of a daughter laſt Saturday, and in a fair way of doing well: ſhe had no melancholy anticipations this time of the painful operation, but preſerv'd her vigour and ſpirits to the laſt, which every body would wiſh well to, if ſhe knew how to keep them under a prudent government. My mother went ten days ago to Tunbridge, to accompany my couſin Lordel; but Sir Richard Blackmore, whom I conſulted, forbid her drinking the waters, having obſerved that they do not ſo well

* The *Incorporated* Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel, of which Dr. Mapletoft was a Vice-Preſident.

† The S.P.C.K. Minutes of Nov. 9, 1699: "Reſolved, that it is the opinion of this Society, that the ſum of 400 and odd pounds expended by Dr. Bray, has been by him advanced towards the propagation of Chriſtian knowledge in the plantations, upon the credit of public benefactions. Reſolved that the intereſt of the ſaid 400 and odd pounds, after a rate of five per cent., do commence from Michaelmas laſt paſt, and be paid to Dr. Bray and his aſſigns, out of the firſt contributions as ſhall be lodged in the Society for the purpoſes before mentioned."

agree with perſons of her age. I venture this letter according to the date of yours, and ſhould be willing to hazard more rather than to omit ſhewing you any teſtimony of the value and eſteem I have for you. 'Twould ſavour of too much formality to beg any excuſe for this long letter, eſpecially ſince I deſign it as a mark of that kindneſs which is with pleaſure paid you by, dear Sir,

"Your moſt faithful friend and ſervant,

"NELSON."

*"REVEREND SIR.—You had received an anſwer ſooner to your very obliging lines of the 13th from Aſpeden, but that I am at preſent in my very agreeable retirement at this place, where I find in my lady the kindneſs of a mother, and in her houſe the ſame freedom as if I were in my own; theſe circumſtances with the native pleaſures of the ſeat, and its being frequented by little or no company, give it a particular reliſh to me, and not the leſs for being envied by few or none. The Rector here is a very good ſcholar, and a man of admirable parts, whoſe converſation is my great diverſion; he labours very hard at preſent in a beautiful tranſlation of the Ancient Apologies for Chriſtianity, which I have put him upon, and adorns them with admirable notes, uſeful and profitable for all readers, which he throws at the bottom of each page. He will have an admirable preface about the right uſe of the Fathers, as a neceſſary introduction to his undertaking; wherein, if I miſtake not, he entirely confutes Daillè, and expoſes his whipt cream with ſome ſalt; and plainly proves that his arguments militate with equal force againſt the Scriptures as againſt the Fathers, and conſequently prove nothing by proving too much. But enough of this to whet your appetite for the future entertainment.

"As to Mr. Oſtervald's Treatiſe againſt Uncleanneſs, I entirely agree with you in your character of it. I read it about three months ago, and eſteem it much the beſt that ever I met with upon the ſubject. This and your commands would have had a great influence upon me, if

‡ "European Magazine," vol. xv. p. 433.

a friend of ours had not made that attempt needleſs; for it is about three months that the book has appeared in Engliſh, being tranſlated when there were very few copies of the original in town. The worthy clergyman who has taken pains to ſuch good purpoſe is Mr. Spinckes; and though I cannot ſay I have compared it with the original, yet I know it is well tranſlated by its reading ſo well, and its appearing to be an original in Engliſh, few or no Galliciſms showing themſelves. He has introduced it with a very handſome and ſolid preface, relating to the ſame ſubject; but his name is not affixed for reaſons that the engaging bookſellers gave him.

"I hope you may live to publiſh it in Latin, for the benefit of the Chriſtian world, it being a ſubject, wherein I am afraid too many fail from want of right notions in that matter.

"I have with a great deal of pleaſure read your Sermons, which are certainly very proper for our deſign, though they cannot be ready ſo ſoon as we intend to give the world a taſte of this Charity; for we ſhall out of hand ſet up fifty-two parochial libraries, which at £16 a library, will amount to £832. We have ſome thouſands of volumes in our repoſitory, and I depend upon your uſual goodneſs, for ſome conſiderable encouragement.

"I am glad to find my attempt of doing good * has had any ſucceſs. I heartily bleſs God, that he has been pleaſed to make me an inſtrument of reviving decayed primitive piety among us, and to His name be the glory. It is a ſort of ſatisfaction which agrees with me better than the laurels of mighty conquerors, whom I often pity rather than admire. The fifth edition is juſt finiſhed, ſo that in four years and a half, there has been 10,000 printed. It is juſt now going to the preſs in Welſh, tranſlated by Mr. Williams of Denbigh, formerly the late Earl of Berkeley's chaplain, and Mr. Mapletoft's neighbour ſometimes at Bugden; and I wonder the bookſeller will venture upon printing 500, but he is well known in Wales, and has lately printed the Common Prayer-book in that language.

* His "Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts."

"I hope you will not defer finiſhing the legacy you deſign for your Pariſh. Thoſe particular addreſſes have an admirable effect; the people think themſelves under greater obligations to read, and are more inclined to comply with thoſe advices, which they think purely framed for themſelves; beſides it will remain as a ſtanding monument of your care for their ſouls, and to which you may appeal at the Day of Judgment.

"I find, Sir, the pleaſure of converſing with an old friend carries me a great way; though I hope you will not think the letter too long ſince it has not appeared ſo to me in writing. Pray God, return you ſafe to your own home. I cannot forbear wiſhing that you may ſometimes be mindful of me, who has always had a great value for you, and continues to be with great ſincerity,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithful friend and humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson.

"Cranford, July 17, 1708.

"My humble ſervice to my worthy friend Mr. Mapletoft, with whom this will, I hope, find you, it being the firſt poſt ſince I received yours."

* "Reverend Sir.—I am very glad to underſtand that my letter, directed to Huntingdon, came ſafe to your hands. It ſatisfied thoſe enquiries you made, and, I hope, confirmed you in the opinion of my readineſs, upon all occaſions to give freſh teſtimonies of my reſpect and eſteem of ſuch a friend as you are. What you are pleaſed to call plain inartificial diſcourſes, I judge moſt proper for the generality of auditors. I think a ſermon may be too correct for a mixt aſſembly; only thoſe that thoroughly underſtand the ſubject can be affected with the beauties of it; but if I would inſtruct to purpoſe in the pulpit, I ſhould ſtudy the popular ſtyle, as beſt turned to do moſt good. Your diſcourſe of *doing good* muſt be ſtill in Mr. Fox's hands, for I have only one volume of your ſermons,

* "European Magazine," vol. xvi. p. 8.

which shall be left at Dr. Butler's when I return to town. He is at present at his living at Boscomb, near Salisbury, famous once for being the residence of the judicious Hooker. I have no correspondence with Mr. Cæsar, and therefore shall not take the good work out of your hands. I was mightily pleased with an answer a clergyman of great figure made me when I asked him if he had read Mr. Ostervald *contre l'Impurité*. He said he had read it with great satisfaction, and was sorry he had not read it sooner; which implies more than can be well expressed. I return you my thanks for your benefaction towards the libraries: if you will be pleased to pay it to Mr. Henry Hoar, goldsmith, in Fleet-street, it will be lodged in a proper place for the purpose you design, and when the trustees meet you will have their united thanks: you need not mention as yet the persons concerned in this charity. I am obliged to you for remembering me at your most serious hours, and shall constantly pray that, by a patient continuance in well doing, you may obtain the crown of life. God has blest you with a soft and gentle old age, and I hope will continue it unto the end. Though true Christian perfection seems to me to consist very much in an entire and ready conformity to the will of God, and prosperity and adversity is more or less grievous or agreeable as it advances or hinders our great end; though the way be very rugged that leads to heaven, it is certainly the best, provided it be the shortest and the surest. I am, reverend Sir,

"Your most faithful friend and humble servant,

"Rob. Nelson.

"Cranford, 17th Aug., 1708.

"Humble service to Dr. Gastril and your daughter."

*"Reverend Sir.—By a letter I received last night from the Countess of Berkeley, who with my Lord are at present at Berkeley Castle, I am desired to consult you concerning your nephew, whether he could, without prejudice

* "European Magazine," vol. xvi. p. 97.

to his affairs, attend my Lord at Berkeley Caſtle this winter, whereby they might try how they liked one another; and if it proved agreeable to both parties, nothing but your nephew's preferment would part them. If your nephew ſhould reſolve to go, I would have him quit nothing till he has made a trial of the circumſtances propoſed. The reſpect my Lord and my Lady bear to the clergy, and the relation Mr. Mapletoft bears to you will ſecure him of good uſage while he is my Lord's chaplain. I have mended the erratas according to the paper you ſent me, and give you a great many thanks for the very agreeable preſent you made me. Such truly pious and Chriſtian diſcourſes* muſt particularly affect your friends and acquaintance, becauſe your own example preaches to them at the ſame time, though all ſtrangers to you that ſeriouſly conſider them, muſt be influenced by the great reaſonableneſs and piety of the performance. It is a very acceptable legacy to your friends and pariſhioners, who will be ſure always to pay a particular regard to it; and it is concluding a pious and devout life with an odour of ſanctity. I recommend myſelf to your prayers, and am with great reſpect,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithful friend, and humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson.

"29 Aug., 1710."

†"Reverend Sir.—I thank you for your very agreeable preſent, and I ſhall take all opportunities to further the diſperſing ſo uſeful a treatiſe. Your printer muſt give notice of it in all the papers. I will endeavour to convince him that his intereſt obliges him to that expenſe. When your ſervant was here yeſterday, I was at Lewiſham, when the Biſhop of Sarum married his eldeſt ſon to Mrs. Mary

* "The Principles and Duties of the Chriſtian Religion conſidered and explained, in order to retrieve and promote the Chriſtian Life, or that holineſs without which no man ſhall ſee the Lord. Divided into 26 chapters, one whereof being read every Lord's day; the whole will be read over twice in the year. By John Mapletoft, D.D., Vicar of St. Lawrence Jewry. 1710."

† "European Magazine," vol. xvi. p. 167.

Stanhope. There is a reaſonable proſpect of happineſs. The misfortune generally is, that young people expect too much, and their diſappointment is generally owing to their own falſe opinion of things. Theſe two young people have both very good ſenſe, and tempers very well ſuited for one another, which with their clerical education will go a great (way) to make them happy. . . . . .
I believe we are very nigh a peace, and if the pa(rliament) judges it a good one, we private people muſt acquieſce; though there is ſuch a ſpirit of diſcord gone forth, that nothing but a war, which we are not able to maintain, will ſatisfy ſome people. God in his good time ſoften all men's minds, and reconcile them to one another!

"I am, my dear friend,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"ROB. NELSON.

"June 4, 1712.

"To the Rev. Dr. Mapletoft,
at Greenwich, Kent."

Among Nelſon's humbler friends was the well-known antiquary, Humphrey Wanley. He was the ſon of the Rev. Nathaniel Wanley, Vicar of Holy Trinity, Coventry, where he was born in the year 1671. The poverty of his father obliged him to breed his ſon to a trade; but his natural taſtes led him to the ſtudy of old printed books and MSS., in deciphering which he acquired great facility and judgment. Dr. Lloyd, Biſhop of Lichfield and Coventry, took notice of his talents, and ſent him to St. Edmund's Hall, Oxford, where he aſſiſted Dr. Mill, the Principal, in his collations of the New Teſtament. He found another patron in Dr. Charlett, Maſter of Univerſity, who took him into his college and houſe, and obtained for him the appointment of under-keeper of the Bodleian. Leaving Oxford for London, he was employed by Dr. Hickes, at whoſe inſtance he travelled over the kingdom in

ſearch of Anglo-Saxon MSS. By Hickes's introduction he was made known to Nelſon, and became his confidential agent and literary factotum. Thus if Nelſon diſtruſts his ſcholarſhip in French at the meetings of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, he begs Wanley to "let the French letter of Oſtervald's, and from Geneva, be tranſlated for me againſt next Thurſday." If he has to prepare an inſcription for a tablet to his wife's memory in Cranford Church, he deſires to ſee Wanley "at his houſe to-morrow morning, about nine o'clock," to talk about it. If his friend Grabe's deceaſe entails upon him ſome embarraſſing buſineſs, he writes to Wanley, "I beg you would let me ſee you any morning, as early as you can. I want to talk with you about Dr. Grabe's affairs." If, on the other hand, Wanley was candidate for a vacant poſt, ſoliciting his appointment as Secretary to the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, or deſirous of changing it for a more advantageous poſt with the Society for the Propagation of the Goſpel; if he was endeavouring to ſucceed Dr. Smith in the cuſtody of the Cottonian Library, or Mr. Chamberlayne at the Paper Office, Nelſon was the friend upon whoſe intereſt he relied, and who never failed to exert himſelf in his behalf. Thus, upon the latter occaſion, he writes to Wanley :—

"Sir.—I wiſh I had more intereſt upon this occaſion, that I might gratify my own inclinations in ſerving you more effectually. I deſire you to peruſe the encloſed letter, and if you think it to the purpoſe, deliver it yourſelf. My lord lodges in Charles Street, at the Surgeons' Arms, near St. James's Square. Though I would not endeavour to have Mr. Chamberlayne turned out, yet if he has not intereſt to preſerve that poſt, I ſhall not ſcruple to promote your pretenſions. You may get Dean Hickes to apply to the Earl of Clarendon, and if Biſhop Nicholſon will be vigorous, he may engage Sir Chriſtopher Muſgrave, who

has a good intereſt in the Earls of Nottingham and Rocheſter. I wiſh you good ſucceſs, and ſhall be glad to hear what progreſs you make.

"I am, your humble ſervant,

"NELSON.

"B. Heath, 22nd June, 1702."

Encloſed was the following:—

"Blackheath, 22 June, 1702.

"MY LORD.—Though the ſolicitations and importunities of pretenders is an inconvenience that attends ſuch as are in great ſtations, yet the capacity of doing good and promoting men of principles and worth, makes ſufficient amends for that alloy. This my Lord, I thought neceſſary to premiſe when I deſigned to recommend the bearer, Mr. Humphrey Wanley, to your Lordſhip's favour and encouragement. Mr. Chamberlayne, I hear, will be put out of the Paper-office, and if that gentleman has not ſufficient intereſt to keep his poſt, I believe few will be found better qualified to ſucceed than the perſon who now preſents himſelf to your Lordſhip. He is ſkilled in many parts of learning and languages, and excels in the knowledge of all ſorts of Manuſcripts. He is a man of right principles in reference to the Church and State; ſo that if your Lordſhip will countenance the applications that are made by his friends to the Earls of Nottingham and Rocheſter, he may hope to ſucceed in what he is well qualified to diſcharge. I hope, my Lord, you will pardon the liberty I take, when I aſſure your Lordſhip it proceeds from a great inclination to ſee worthy men employed, and to hear your Lordſhip eſteemed their great Mecænas.

"I am, with all imaginable reſpect, my Lord,

"Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient ſervant,

"NELSON.

"To Lord * * * *."

Another of Nelſon's intimate friends was the pious and learned Dr. Grabe, who was particularly recommended

to him by the preference which he had ſo remarkably avowed for the epiſcopal regimen of the Engliſh Church. John Erneſt Grabe was originally a member of the Lutheran Church of Pruſſia, having been born in 1660, at Konigſburg, where his father was Univerſity Profeſſor. His ſtudy of Chriſtian antiquity led him to great diſſatisfaction with the Lutheran Communion, as wanting thoſe Holy orders and that Apoſtolic Succeſſion, which he conceived to be a note of a true Church; and he left his native place accordingly in 1695, with the intention of joining the Church of Rome, as more conformable in theſe points to the precedent of the Primitive Church. From this ſtep he was diſſuaded by Spener the Pietiſt divine, who pointed to the Church of England, as a Communion in which he might enjoy all the ſatisfaction of a duly authoriſed miniſtry, unalloyed by the corruptions of the Romiſh Church. He accordingly repaired to England, where he received a penſion of £100 from King William, took prieſt's orders, became a chaplain of Chriſt Church, and applied himſelf to Theological labours. In 1698 he publiſhed a collection of Patriſtic Tracts, under the title of *Spicilegium SS. Patrum;* induced (he ſays) to this compilation by the conſideration that there could be no better expedient towards Chriſtian union than to reflect on the practices and tenets of the primitive fathers; ſentiments which induced him alſo to carry through the preſs a new edition of Juſtin Martyr's Apologies, and of the Works of Irenæus. His great reputation induced Queen Anne to ſelect him to edit the Septuagint from the Alexandrian MSS. in St. James's Library, adding upon the occaſion a preſent of £60 at the inſtance of Harley his patron. In 1703 he was entruſted with the taſk of editing, with annotations, a collection of Bull's Latin Works; at which time we may ſuppoſe him to have gained the friendſhip of Nelſon, if they had not pre-

viouſly been made known to one another by their mutual friend Smalridge. His life was one of laborious ſtudy, as well as of great abſtemiouſneſs and devotion, ſo as to conciliate the reſpect of even those who, like Kennet,* felt no ſympathy whatever with his theological opinions. His friends, as Nelſon, Smalridge, and Hickes, were enthuſiaſtic in their admiration and eſteem for his character and learning.

"Who can mention Dr. Grabe," exclaims the former, in his Life of Biſhop Bull, "without a deep and particular concern for the loſs of ſo great a man, in the very prime of his age, when we expected to reap the fruit of his indefatigable ſtudies, which were chiefly converſant about Chriſtian antiquities; and who by an eminent author† is very aptly compared 'to a great and mighty prince, who dying, leaves behind him many plans of noble and curious buildings; foundations of others; others erected above-ground; ſome half, others almoſt, and others perfectly finiſhed. Such are

* Kennet (MSS. collections, vol. xvi. pp. 345, &c.) has ſeveral curious particulars of Dr. Grabe, whom he viewed with another eye than Nelſon did. Thus he writes: "Saturday night, Nov. 3, 1711, departed this life, Dr. John Erneſt Grabe, the moſt learned and pious gentleman that this age has produced." "Dr. Grabe buried on Thurſday night, Nov. 8, 1711, at St. Pancras Church, attended by the Pruſſian envoy, Dr. Smalridge, Dr. Pelling, Dr. Sherlock, Dr. Gaſcarth, Dr. Marſhall, and other divines. He lay long in St. Paul's churchyard under the Surgeon's hands, for an abſceſs in his belly, brought on by his ſtudies and faſting." He complains that though a chaplain of Chriſt Church, Oxford, he yet never received the communion in our Church, "objecting that we wanted the eſſential form of praying God the Father to ſend down the Holy Ghoſt to ſanctify and tranſmute the elements. He was much for external rites in Confeſſion and Abſolution. He abſolved a penitent in the veſtry of Bow Church, with proſtration of the perſon and laying by his own wig, and kneeling and bowing to the earth three times, and impoſition of both hands, and all other poſſible viſible ſigns of profound ceremony. On his death, he deſired a ſolemn abſolution from the miniſter, and would have his head bare, and be held up in a kneeling poſture. Indeed his piety and our charity may cover all this. But otherwiſe I know not what rule required it at his hands." He adds, "Poor Dr. Grabe's receiving the abſolution from Dr. Smalridge, the communion from Dr. Hickes, and being buried in St. Pancras Church (where the Roman Catholics dying in or near this city have been commonly interred), occaſions talk."

† Dr. Hickes.

the remains left us by this great maſter builder, as may appear by the catalogue of his manuſcripts.'

"All the learned, who could beſt judge of his great talents, readily offer him that incenſe of praiſe which is juſtly due to his profound erudition; whereby he was qualified to enlighten the dark and obſcure parts of eccleſiaſtical hiſtory, to trace the original frame and ſtate of the Chriſtian Church, and to reſtore the ſacred volumes, the pillars of our faith, to their primitive perfection.

"He had ſo great a zeal for promoting the ancient government and diſcipline of the Church, among all thoſe who had ſeparated themſelves from the corruptions and ſuperſtitions of the Church of Rome, that he formed a plan, and made ſome advances in it, for reſtoring the epiſcopal order and office in the territories of the King of Pruſſia his ſovereign; and propoſed, moreover, to introduce a liturgy, much after the model of the Engliſh ſervice, into that king's dominions; and recommended likewiſe the uſe of the Engliſh liturgy itſelf, by the means of ſome of his friends, to a certain neighbouring court. By which means he would have united the two main bodies of Proteſtants, in a more perfect and apoſtolical reformation, than that upon which either of them did yet ſtand, and would thereby have fortified the common cauſe of their proteſtation againſt the errors of popery. But yet his learned ſtudies did not ſo engroſs his mind, as to prevent his daily attending the hours of public prayer, to which purpoſe he always choſe his lodgings near a church: neither did the applauſe he received from the greateſt men of the age ſo exalt him, but that he readily condeſcended to converſe with thoſe of the loweſt underſtanding, when he could be any ways ſerviceable to them in their ſpiritual concerns.

"He was juſtly eſteemed one of the greateſt divines of the age; yet the great modeſty of his temper, and the profound humility of his mind, made him prefer others before himſelf. He laid the chiefeſt ſtreſs upon the conſtant practice of the vertues of the Chriſtian life, and was alſo a ſtrict obſerver of all the rules of the apoſtolical times, and of the Catholic uſages of the firſt Chriſtians. He bore his laſt ſickneſs, which deprived the world of ſo great a treaſure,

with moſt exemplary patience, and submiſſion to the will of God; and exerciſed all thoſe acts of devotion, which the beſt of men are zealouſly intent upon in their laſt labours for immortality. He was very ſevere upon himſelf, even for thoſe common human frailties, which are apt to cleave to thoſe of the greateſt eminence for their ſanctity, and, with true compunction, bewailed the neglects and omiſſions of his duty, which from the unſeaſonable reſort of company, he ſometimes was forced to. And yet he thanked God from the bottom of his heart, that through the aſſiſtance of His grace, he had ſo far overcome thoſe temptations which he had met with in life, that he never proſtituted his conſcience for the ſake of gain, or defiled his body, which he always had kept pure from the mortal sin of uncleanneſs. He had conſtantly every day, and frequently ſeveral times in the day, the office of the viſitation of the ſick, with ſome proper collects of his own chuſing, uſed by his bed-side, and he commonly deſired the impoſition of the prieſt's hands, when the abſolution or bleſſing was pronounced over him. He received the communion of our Lord's body and blood with great devotion, ſeveral times during his ſevere viſitation, to fortify him in his paſſage to eternity; and was at laſt ſet at liberty from the bondage of his mortal body, upon the 3rd of November, 1711, in the 46th year of his age. The occaſion of his death was a bruiſe which he got in his ſide, at the place of his liver, when he made his laſt journey to Oxford in the ſtage coach, in proſecuting the noble work he had in hand; which accident being neglected at firſt, upon his return to London became thus fatal."

He was buried in the chancel of St. Pancras Church, his friend Smalridge reading the funeral office, and a concourſe of Engliſh divines attending his remains. He exhibited his confidence in Nelſon's friendſhip, by appointing him executor of his will, deſiring him to obtain the aſſiſtance of Francis Lee, in preparing his manuſcripts for Hickes' peruſal. Nelſon, on his part, was not wanting to the memory of his friend. He was forward to vindicate him

from ſome aſperſions upon his character, which had been induſtriouſly circulated, and which had prejudiced him in the eſtimation of Biſhop Wake*; and when Hickes publiſhed a poſthumous tract of Grabe's againſt Whiſton, with ſome account of the author's life and writings, Nelſon ſolicited Harley's patronage of the work in the following letter:†

"June 26, 1712.

"My Lord.—It is very fit that everything that is publiſhed of Dr. Grabe's ſhould be laid before your Lordſhip, becauſe you were pleaſed, in a very diſtinguiſhing manner, both in his life and at his death, to ſhew yourſelf to be his patron.

"The learned prefatory diſcourſe of Dean Hickes gives him a title humbly to beg your lordſhip's acceptance of the whole performance.‡ The catalogue of the MSS. that Dr. Grabe hath left behind him, I preſume to offer to your lordſhip, as what will enlarge your opinion of his extenſive learning and capacity, and at the ſame time afford your lordſhip ſome agreeable entertainment. I have returned to Dr. Bentley the books which Dr. Grabe had borrowed from the Queen's library, which I think myſelf obliged to acquaint your lordſhip with, becauſe I underſtand you had the trouble of an application upon that ſubject. I ſhall not venture to take any ſtep toward printing the remaining part of the Septuagint, till I have received your lordſhip's directions in that matter. I am, with all imaginable reſpect, your lordſhip's moſt obedient and

"Moſt humble ſervant,

"Robert Nelson."

* Wake's "Miſcellaneous Papers," vol. i. (in the library of Chriſt Church, Oxon), contain a letter to Wake from Potter, then Regius Profeſſor of Divinity, mentioning a certificate which Nelſon had ſent him from Smith the bookſeller, avouching Grabe, who had lodged in his houſe, to be 'a mortified, chaſte, and very good man,' by way of counteracting theſe aſperſions on his character.

† Nichols' "Anecdotes of Bowyer," p. 5.

‡ Some inſtances of the defects and omiſſions of Mr. Whiſton's Collection of Teſtimonies from the Scriptures and the Fathers, againſt the true Deity of

And one of the laſt letters* which Nelſon wrote was to forward the completion of the monument which Lord Oxford had directed to be put up in Weſtminſter Abbey to the memory of his friend.

"My Lord,—I have endeavoured ſeveral times to pay my duty to your lordſhip, ſince you have retired from public affairs, but never had the happineſs of meeting with your lordſhip. I am obliged to acquaint you that Mr. Bird has made conſiderable progreſs in Dr. Grabe's monument, and that part of my agreement with him was that he ſhould receive fifty pounds this Michaelmas, which he has put me in mind of. I hope to bring the whole expenſe under what your lordſhip was willing to beſtow. Pray God protect your lordſhip from the aſſaults of your enemies, and keep you ſafe againſt all their attempts. I am, with great reſpect,

"Your Lordſhip's moſt obedient, and
"Moſt humble ſervant,
"Rob. Nelson."

"Oct. 4, 1714."

Nelſon's friendſhip with Hickes, or Wanley, may have procured him the acquaintance of Dr. Charlett, maſter of Univerſity College, Oxford, who, in his younger days had been patroniſed by the former, and who had himſelf befriended the latter during his reſidence at Oxford. Charlett would have an additional hold upon Nelſon's ſympathies by his Tory politics, which occaſioned his diſmiſſal from his chaplaincy to the King, ſhortly after the acceſſion of George I. The following are ſome of the letters addreſſed by Nelſon to this academical correſpondent:—

† "Reverend Sir,—I was very unfortunate not to ſee your worthy neighbour the preſident of C. C. C., when he was in town; but your obliging letter of the 22nd April was left at my houſe, whereby I perceive you received from

the Son and the Holy Ghoſt; to which is prefixed a diſcourſe, wherein ſome account is given of the Doctor and of his MSS. by Geo. Hickes, D.D. 1712."

* Nichol's "Anecdotes of Bowyer," p. 6.

† "Aubrey's Letters," vol. i. 62.

me the firſt news of the Armenian Archbiſhop ; who deſigns, as I am informed, to ſet out this week for Oxford with a cargo of thoſe books he has printed in his own language for the promoting piety and learning, which he deſigns as a preſent to the public library. I need not entreat your favour in his behalf; your own obliging diſpoſition will prompt you to do him what ſervice lies in your power. He has not yet procured above 200, as yet, to his admirable deſigns, neither, as I underſtand, does he aim at above 100 more, which ſhews that he is not very intent upon gain. I muſt beg of you to recommend him particularly in my name to our worthy friend the preſident, who is able and ready for good works. I rather chooſe this way of making the Archbiſhop known to you, than by ſending a letter by himſelf, becauſe this leaves you more at liberty.

"I have juſt finiſhed Dr. Potter's diſcourſe of Church-government, which I look upon as a moſt admirable performance, and which will, I hope, by the bleſſing of God, rectify thoſe looſe notions which too many learned and judicious men have entertained in that matter. I am glad ſuch a book comes from that quarter, for I apprehend that ſet of men ſtand moſt in need of it. By my conſent every candidate for holy orders ſhould be obliged to give a perfect account of it before he is ordained, and then we might hope the ſame notions by degrees might be inſtilled into the laity. The Dean's admirable book* is this day publiſhed, and I am not a little pleaſed to ſee that he and Dr. Potter ſhould agree in eccleſiaſtical principles. But of all this, Sir, you will make a better judgment yourſelf, tho', when our minds are full, we cannot help venting ourſelves to our friends.

"I am very much concerned that the Charity Schools are not yet ſet up in your Univerſity ; certainly it deſerves the conſideration of ſo great and weighty a body. I am, reverend Sir,

"Your faithful, humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"22 May, 1707,
"Aſcenſion-day."

* Hickes's "Two Treatiſes, on the Chriſtian Prieſthood, and Epiſcopal Order;" the ſecond edition of which, with a preface in anſwer to Tindal, appeared in 1707.

* "REVEREND SIR,—I do moſt heartily congratulate the advantageous addition the Providence of God has made to your circumſtances. I find all your friends rejoice upon this occaſion,† and indeed, all good men have reaſon to expreſs their ſatisfaction, becauſe a plentiful fortune ſits beſt upon thoſe who have generous and obliging inclinations.

"I owe a great many thanks to you in particular, for your kindneſs to the venerable Archbiſhop; you did a great deal of juſtice to the Univerſity in the reſpect you paid him and in the handſome preſent you provided for him: he retains a grateful ſenſe of it, and his nephew expreſſed himſelf very fully upon that ſubject before his departure.

"I hope to find a way of addreſſing the Vice-Chancellor about the Charity Schools. It is very fit they ſhould take their riſe from him. When Dr. Gaſtrell's Sermon is printed, and the account that is to be annexed to it, I will take care it ſhall be laid before him.

"I was very ſorry I was out of town, when you did me the favour of a viſit; my worthy neighbour took care to let me know the kindneſs you deſigned me. May you long enjoy the good living you are in poſſeſſion of, and ſpeedily obtain, what you have reaſon farther to expect.

"I am, Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"ROB. NELSON."

"12 July, 1707,
"Ormond Street."

‡"REVEREND SIR,—I rejoice very much at the progreſs that is made toward the ſetting up Charity Schools in Oxford. It will be much to the honour of the Univerſity, as well as for the benefit of the poor inhabitants. I ſhall be glad to know to what ſum your

* "Aubrey's Letters," vol. i. 63.

† Charlett had been inſtituted to the living of Hambleden, Bucks, June 28, 1707.

‡ "Aubrey's Letters," vol. i. 64.

ſubſcriptions amount already, and if you want any aſſiſtance from London as to the methods of erecting the ſchools; I will undertake to ſend a perſon on purpoſe, rather than the work ſhould miſcarry.

"As to the caſe you put in relation to the Sunday and Holyday Service; which ought to have the preference when they meet?—I think, if I miſtake not, our Rubric has determined it. Among the orders for reading the Holy Scriptures, there are theſe words:—'And note that whenſoever Proper Pſalms or Leſſons are appointed, then the Pſalms and Leſſons of ordinary courſe appointed in the Pſalter and Kalendar, if they be different, ſhall be omitted for that time.' The ſame diſcretion is given in the Rubric about the Firſt Leſſon; from which I argue that the Holyday Leſſons being the proper Leſſons and the Sunday thoſe of ordinary courſe, the firſt ought to take the place of the latter, by which all the reſt of the ſervice ought to be regulated. In the caſe of Chriſtmas Day which ſometimes falls upon a Sunday, it is never diſputed and I believe it will hold in all other Holy days, when the Sunday Collect may be uſed with that of the Holy day. My good neighbour, who is much your humble ſervant, is of the ſame opinion; and I am, with great reſpect,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt obedient humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"St. Simon and St. Jude,
"1707."

* "Reverend Sir,—I have been lately for ſome time abſent from London, and returned but this evening, which is the true reaſon I have deferred anſwering yours of the 4th inſtant, which has lain upon my table ever ſince.

"We want Rubrics upon ſeveral occaſions and particularly in the caſe you put about Advent Sunday, and St. Andrew's falling upon the ſame day; but I can tell you the Church of Rome put the Firſt Sunday in Advent in the number of the Sundays of the *primæ claſſis*,

* "Aubrey's Letters," vol. i. 65.

as Eaſter Sunday, Whit Sunday, and Trinity Sunday, which take place of all other Holy days; ſo that according to that rule, the Epiſtle and Goſpel for the Sunday ought to be read, though both Collects may be uſed, but this is all I know in that matter.

"I ſhould be glad to have a particular account of your ſubſcription, which other hands make amount to above £100 a year.

"I am,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"R. NELSON."

"St. Andrew's Eve, 1707,
"Ormond Street."

* "REVEREND SIR,—I have received both your letters, 25th February and 1ſt March, in an agreable retirement near London; a bad cough drove me hither, and Lent keeps me here. I am very glad your ſchools go on ſo well; if you have proper maſters, they will underſtand the beſt methods of teaching. If at my return I can be ſerviceable to you, you ſhall not fail to hear from me. Lady Guildford was brought a-bed ſix weeks agoe, I think 'twas a ſon. I look upon St. Mathias in the Church of England to be fixt to the 24th. I know in the Church of Rome 'tis moveable on leap-year. I ſhould have been glad to have known what ſatisfaction Dr. Potter had given to the Univerſity: his own merit muſt make his way, when another would have been more agreable.

"I am, Rev^{d}. Sir,

"Your moſt faithfull humble ſervant,

"R. NELSON."

"Cranford,
"9th Mar., 1707."

"REVEREND SIR,—I find myſelf obliged to return you my humble thanks for two admirable ſermons, which are very fit to be made publick, and do great juſtice and honour to that venerable body from whence they proceed.

* This and the following letters to Charlett are now firſt printed from the MSS. in the Bodleian Library.

It is a great comfort to me to ſee that when preaching begins to dwindle ſo very much in town, it flouriſhes with ſo much vigour in the Univerſity. For our young divines ſtudy ſpruceneſs in their diſcourſes more than ſolidity, they give you a ſhort but an imperfect eſſay upon ſome vertue, but very ſeldome treat a point in divinity ſubſtantially, or confirm it by the explication of ſeveral paſſages of Scripture, which I take to be moſt edifying. I think Mr. Lupton has in moſt places argued very ſtrongly, and expreſſed himſelf with great clearneſs and perſpicuity; and in the main not without reſpect to that great man from whom he differs in the way and manner of proving the Article, tho' I am ſatisfied they agree in the beleif of it, as is very clear from ſeveral other paſſages of Archbiſhop Tillotſon's works. The letter you mentioned I coppied* long ago from the original, and think it very perfect in its kind; I have often wiſhed that all his letters writ upon particular ſubjects were collected and printed; they would make a moſt agreable entertainment, for he had the happineſs of treating any ſubject with great fullneſs in ſhort, and at the ſame time avoided all obſcurity to which ſuch attempts are often ſubject. I yeſterday by chance met with your Vice-Chancellour, whoſe conduct in the Univerſity I have very much admired, and whoſe zeal in promoting the Charity Schools I particularly took notice of.

"I am, Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithfull humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"Ormond Street,
"4th Aug., 1708."

"Reverend Sir,—I have received the favour of both your letters of the 10th and 20th inſtant, which found me under a ſevere fit of the gout, which makes me a cripple

* At the end of the "Chriſtian Exerciſe" (to which Nelſon wrote a preface), is printed "A Copy of a Letter from the Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Tillotſon (afterwards Archbiſhop), to a friend of his, who laid very ill of a languiſhing diſtemper, whereof he died; which was tranſcribed by Mr. Nelſon with his own hand, being communicated to him by the Author, his very particular friend and correſpondent."

in both my feet. I inquired about printing the Church Catechiſm by itſelf, a right which I perceive the Univerſity has parted with, and therefore I have nothing farther to ſay upon that point. I return my hearty thanks for the trouble I have given you upon this account. I have Calepin's Dictionary, in a very thick folio, which contains upon eight of the modern languages. I never read that paraphraſe upon the Pſalms which you mention.

"I am, Rev^{d}. Sir,

"Your faithfull humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"St. Mathias."

"Reverend Sir,—I beg the favour of you to lend me, or to borrow for me, if it is not in your own ſtudy, Fille-ſachus's Com^{ts} upon Vincentius Lirinenſis; it is a book in quarto, printed in 1619, as I think at Paris, for he was a doctor of the Sorbonne. I know if you can meet with it in any library except the Bodleian, you have intereſt to procure it, and I ſhall take it for a great favour, becauſe I have uſe for it. I incloſe you two letters from Mr. Weſley and his wife to Mr. Henry Hoare, which give I beleive a very true account of their calamitous circumſtances. If any charitable gentleman in your neighbourhood will contribute to their releif, Mr. Hoare receives for them. Some people of quality have already ſent in their benefactions. I continue ſtill confined by the gout, though I am upon the mending hand; this gives me the advantage of ſeeing my freinds, and my worthy neighbour the Dean very often, to my ſatisfaction.

"I am, Reverend Sir,

"Your faithfull humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"3 March, 170$\frac{8}{9}$,
"Ormond Street."

"Reverend Sir,—I return you my humble thanks for refreſhing my memory with many beautifull paſſages in the poets of the po'ite age, and I muſt own, that I am not ſo

mortified as not to reliſh the entertainment. Beſides, you have taken care to raiſe the guſto by prefixing your undeſerved good opinion of me and your good wiſhes. I will take the liberty to make you a preſent by the Munday's coach of a book of another kind, which relates to the propagation of the Goſpel in the Eaſt, which opens a noble ſcene of comfort and joy to all thoſe that are ſenſible of the ineſtimable benefits of Chriſtianity. This beſt of charities has been ſolicited by private hands for about two months, and there has been collected between 4 and £500, and by theſe Eaſt India ſhips that are now going for thoſe parts, they have ſupplied the miſſionaries with a printing preſs, 600 weight of letters, 100 rhems of paper, a printer who is paid for a year, ſeveral copies of the Goſpel in Portugueſe, which with a quantity of pieces of eight, makes the expence amount to above £400. The particulars of this miſſion you will learn from the letters. I deſire you to deliver the other book to Sir Philip Sydenham, and thoſe unbound you may beſtow where you think they will do moſt good. Mr. Reeves's Apologys are for Baliol college, which are juſtly due as you know very well. I do not queſtion but that you have the names of the twelve new chaplains; there are four Chriſtchurch men among the number, as you will eaſily perceive. My moſt humble ſervice to Sir Philip and to thoſe who are ſo kind as to wiſh me well.

"I am, with great eſteem, Reverend Sir,

"Your faithful humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson.

"The Convocation will receive the Queen's licence next Wedneſday to go upon buſineſs, and I hope that venerable body will convince the world that they are of conſequence."

"20 Jan., 17$\frac{19}{11}$."

"Reverend Sir,—According to your directions, I have ſent the two letters you committed to my care, and return you my humble thanks for the concern you ſhow for my health. I am very glad the Queen is ſo vigorous as to purſue her ſport ſo frequently. I hope it will ſecure her

health, which is of great importance to the happineſs of our country; neither am I leſs pleaſed with that deference ſhe pays to the clergy, which was alwaies an honour to the greateſt of emperors. I ſend you the encloſed* that you may ſubſcribe yourſelf, and procure ſubſcriptions from others that are charitably diſpoſed. It is for the ſake of Mr. Williams I ſolicite, and have engaged for a 100 copies myſelf. Mr. Jennings and I ſet forward from Mr. Cook's near Uxbridge towards Bath next Tueſday, and ſhall be that night at Oxford, with a deſign to ſpend two days there. Your abſence will be a great alloy to my pleaſure in that place, but I ſhall meet freinds with whom I ſhall remember Dr. Charlet. I forgot to acquaint you that my Lord Keeper has beſtowed Reading upon my friend Mr. Reeves, which generally gives ſatisfaction. I wiſh you the continuance of your health, and am with great eſteem,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithfull humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"9th Aug., 1711,
"The Election day of the Emperour."

"Reverend Sir,—I was very well pleaſed to ſee the printed account of your ſchools, but I did not know to whoſe favour I owed it till I received your letter. It was indeed left at my houſe by one ſent from Mr. Biſhop, but that did not clear to whom I had the obligation. I hope you found Mr. Reeves pretty well. I fancy you wait at court together, becauſe he is of your month, and talks of appearing in his ſtation the 1ſt Aug. The charity of ſupplying Scotland with Common Prayer-books may be of great conſequence, for tho' the biſhops when eſtabliſhed there were not able to bring in our liturgy, yet when that has got good ground among them 'tis to be hoped it may help to reſtore them. I know you are a curious man, and well ſkilled as in ancient ſo in modern hiſtory; and there-

* Apparently, a ſubſcription liſt for the "Feſtivals and Faſts" in Welſh, tranſlated by Mr. Williams. See p. 166.

fore I muſt diſire you that if you have any memoires relating to Bp. Bull, that you would [be] pleaſed to communicate them to me, for when I ſhall publiſh his poſthumous works, I ſhall be obliged to give ſome account of him in my preface. One Mr. Thomas, of Chriſtchurch, was an intimate freind of Bp. Bull's; I hear you knew that perſon intimately, and deſire you would at leaſt ſend me ſome account of him. My worthy freind Dr. Stratford took his leave of me this morning, ſo that you will quickly ſee him at Oxford. My moſt humble ſervice to all freinds that honour me with their remembrance. I am with great ſincerity,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithfull humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"21st June, 1712.

"Pray for me to-morrow, becauſe 'tis my birthday."

The preceding letters to Mapletoft and Charlett will have exhibited Robert Nelſon in the unreſerve of private life, or amid the occupations of charity and religion. A different feature in his character, the intereſt, namely, which he took in the political combinations of the time, may be illuſtrated by an epiſtle of congratulation which he took occaſion to addreſs to Harley, upon the acceſſion of his party to office. The ill-adviſed proſecution of Dr. Sacheverell by the Whigs had ſerved to elicit the Tory ſympathies of the country; the Queen felt herſelf encouraged to throw off the intolerable yoke under which ſhe had been held by the imperious Ducheſs of Marlborough; Lord Godolphin and his friends were diſcarded from office, and the "Church Party," as they were called, were inſtalled in their room; Robert Harley, a relative of Mrs. Maſham, the new favourite, taking the lead in the Tory adminiſtration as

Chancellor of the Exchequer, and Under Treasurer. Robert Nelson lost no time in congratulating the new minister, the very day after his appointment, in the following letter:—

* "Sir,—I beg leave to take this way of congratulating that justice which is at length done to your merit, and of expressing my satisfaction in the conquest you have gained over your enemies, who were earnestly bent upon your destruction; 'their tongues imagined wickedness, and with lies they cut like a sharp razor.' I cannot but think it happy for a nation, when persons in great stations encourage learning and the liberal sciences; and that has been always so much your character, that the rising generation will chearfully apply themselves to their studies, now they know there are patrons that are disposed to distinguish their talents; and it will be a comfort to those that do not expect favours, securely to depend upon their having justice.

"I am, with great respect, Sir,

"Your most obedient and most humble servant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"August 11, 1710."

To political sympathies of a similar kind we owe probably, in part, an elaborate letter of compliment, which we find Nelson addressing to Matthew Prior, the poet and diplomatist. Prior had for some years abandoned his Whig connections, and was waiting to take service under Shrewsbury and Harley; the victory of Ramillies gave him an opportunity of exercising his poetical talents in an Ode of Congratulation to Queen Anne; and Nelson addressed to him an eulogistic epistle on the occasion, the sentiments of which modern criticism will scarcely be found to

* Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes," iv. 195.

endorſe. Prior's poem is characteriſed by Johnſon as tedious and inconſequential, and wearying both the ear and the underſtanding. "His imitations of Spenſer," he complains, "which conſiſt principally of I ween and I weet, without excluſion of later modes of ſpeech, make his poem neither ancient nor modern. His mention of Mars and Bellona, and his compariſon of Marlborough to the eagle that bears the thunder of Jupiter, are all puerile and unaffecting; and yet more deſpicable is the long tale told by Lewis, in his deſpair, of Brute and Troynovante, and the teeth of Cadmus, with his ſimiles of the raven and eagle, and wolf and lion. By the help of ſuch eaſy fictions and vulgar topics, without acquaintance with life, and without knowledge of art or nature, a poem of any length, cold and lifeleſs like this, may be eaſily written on any ſubject." With this judgment of our great critic it is amuſing to contraſt the laviſh and unſuſpicious praiſes of Nelſon, all whoſe writings ſhow him to have been utterly devoid of imaginative power, and who appears from this letter to Prior, to have been equally deficient in poetical diſcrimination.

* "Dear Sir,—I have been ſo agreeably entertained in my retirement at this place with the beauties of your charming Muſe, that mere ſenſe of gratitude for the pleaſure I have enjoyed conſtrains me to pay my acknowledgments to the maſterly hand that adminiſtered it. And indeed, I muſt own, the banquet is ſo elegantly prepared, that at the ſame time that it raiſes my admiration, it gratifies and ſatisfies my appetite to the full; and yet I can return to it with freſh guſto: for *decies repetita placebit*.

"Our age is moſt certainly happy in this, that when our

* Nichols' "Literary Anecdotes," iv. 193, et seqq.

countrymen fight with ſo much bravery, we have a conſummate poet that ſecures their hardy deeds from oblivion, and places their battles in eternal light. You obſerve a decency throughout your whole ode, which is the effect of your true good ſenſe; that when with a liberal hand you beſtow your incenſe upon our great General, it ſtill riſes in thicker clouds towards her who made his arms her choice. I could wiſh our pulpit orators underſtood the ſame decorum; and then all their particular praiſes would have had a relation to their main ſubject. Without the bias of friendſhip, I may venture to ſay you have improved thoſe hints you have borrowed from Horace; and were I as well acquainted with Spenſer,* I believe I ſhould have reaſon to make the ſame judgment in reference to your ſtyle. I am ſure, whatever his is, your imagination is warm, and your expreſſions noble and majeſtic: and yet they never carry you out of ſight: but you are always pleaſed to be intelligible. I have but one query to make, which I doubt not but that you can reſolve; which is, that though the Dane deſerves the epithet cruel, which you beſtow upon him; yet whether it was not neceſſary to have ſoftened it, for the ſake of that Prince† that is ſo nearly related to the ſubject of your poem. Pardon this criticiſm; for I am rather inclined to think it wrong, than to tax you with the leaſt imperfection. It is poſſible you may think this whole letter very impertinent, becauſe it comes from a perſon ſo little capable in judging of theſe matters, and in deſcribing countries where he has never travelled. But my mind was full; and I found it neceſſary to give it vent. Beſides, I thought it friendly to acquaint you how much I ſhare in your glorious ſucceſs, and that the ſhort journey you have made to Parnaſſus turns ſo much to your ſolid reputation. I ſhall conclude this trouble when I have aſſured you that I have no ways deſigned to reproach you for not making me a preſent of your noble ode. I live in too much obſcurity to be remembered by a perſon ſo thronged with

* Prior, in the Preface to this Ode, calls Horace and Spenſer "his two great examples."

† Prince George of Denmark; huſband of the Queen.

acquaintance of the beſt ſort as you are; and yet I am willing to flatter myſelf with a ſhare in your friendſhip; and, if I can give no other reaſon, I can always alledge that value and reſpect with which I am, dear Sir,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson.

"P.S. I had almoſt forgot to do juſtice to thoſe admirable materials* you have provided for erecting a column to perpetuate the Queen's glory to future generations; and yet it ſtruck me with particular pleaſure, from that knowledge I have of thoſe monuments that have been raiſed to the two Emperors you mention. It is a great misfortune that we have no eminent ſculptor that can execute what you have ſo maſterly deſigned. Such a work would make London exceed Rome in a monumental pillar, as much as it does already outdo her in trade and commerce. But we will glory that it ſtands fixt in your verſes; where lateſt times may read Anna's immortal fame.

"I deſire to know whether the Queen has made you any preſent, to ſhow her ſenſe of your exquiſite performance. I wiſh it for her ſake, as well as yours.

"Cranford, July 20, 1706."

A much more congenial intimate of Robert Nelſon's during the latter years of his life, was Ralph Thoreſby, the well-known Yorkſhire antiquary, whoſe occaſional reſidence in London, when carrying his "Topography of Leeds" through the preſs, and whoſe connection with the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, as a correſponding

* In the ſix concluding ſtanzas. There was an intention to erect ſome national monument to the glory of the Queen and her hero, the Duke of Marlborough; and Claud David of Burgundy publiſhed a large ſheet-print, from the model of a fountain, with the ſtatues of Queen Anne, the Duke of Marlborough on horſeback, and ſeveral river gods, deſigned to be erected at the Conduit in Cheapſide.

member, brought him into occaſional contact with many of the leading Churchmen of the day. Thoreſby became acquainted with Nelſon in 1708, and thus notices their firſt interview in a letter to his friend Richardſon :—"I was with ſeveral of the deans, and other authors of the clergy and of the laity; amongſt whom I was particularly pleaſed with Mr. Nelſon, who has printed prayers upon the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church, and who, with Sir Iſaac Newton, who is Preſident of the Royal Society, obliged me with their names in my travelling album." (Feb. 23, $170\frac{8}{9}$). After this date, Thoreſby's publiſhed Journal ſupplies repeated notices of his friend, and exhibits the intimacy of the footing on which they were uſed to meet. Thus :—

"1709. Jan. 28.—Walked to Dr. Hickes'. Afterwards viſited his good neighbour, the pious and ingenious Robert Nelſon, Eſq., with whoſe excellent converſe I was very well pleaſed; he obliged me with four original letters from very eminent hands; viz., Cardinal Norfolk, the Biſhop of Meaux's, and Elector and Electrice Palatine; and with his own two excellent treatiſes of the Feaſts and Faſts of the Church, and of the Sacrament.

"1709. Dec. 26.—Concluded Dr. Hickes' 'Anſwer to the Popiſh Prieſt,' an excellent tract upon that ſubject, with an appendix of ſome very curious papers, as the Biſhop of Meaux's letter and Biſhop Bull's anſwer, a letter of the pious Mr. Nelſon to a Prieſt, and a Saxon office. The excellent Mr. Nelſon has preſented me with the original letter of the ſaid French Biſhop.

"1712. June 19.—Viſited the excellent Mr. Nelſon, who preſented me with his 'Feaſts and Faſts' tranſlated into Welſh.

"July 24.—At the Meeting of the Royal Society, where met Mr. Nelſon, and a meſſage by him from the Lady Elizabeth Haſtings as a ſubſcriber.*

"Auguſt 7.—Walked to Bloomſbury, to enquire after the engraving by Mr. Virtue; then to take leave of the pious and excellent Mr. Nelſon.

"Auguſt 22.—A moſt kind letter ſent me from Whitehall, wherein good Mr. Newman acquainted me that, at the motion of the excellent Mr. Nelſon (the pious author of the 'Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church' and other devout tracts), the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge had elected me a correſponding member of their Society, with a pleaſing account of their ſucceſs in ten years ſince their inſtitution.

"Aug. 25.—Troubled to miſs of the excellent Mr. Nelſon and a clergyman (whether Dean Hickes or Dr. Bray, I know not), who came to viſit me.

"1714. May 13.—At the Meeting of the Royal Society, Sir Iſaac Newton, the Preſident, and . . . . . but I left all to go with Mr. Chamberlayne, to Bartlett's Buildings, to the other Society, viz., that for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, which is to be preferred to all other learning. Dr. Pelling read the prayers before the conſultation begun; then were read ſome pious and very moving letters from correſponding members, relating to Charity Schools and other pious deſigns in diſtant places, and an account of collections nearer hand. Reſolutions for printing the Bible in Welſh, with a greater number of the New Teſtament and Prayer Books. I came away with my pious and honoured friend, Mr. Nelſon.

"1714. May 18.—To viſit Mr. Nelſon, and the learned

* *i. e.*, to Thoreſby's book.

Dr. Hickes, who not being at liberty of half an hour, I had the benefit of the prayers in the adjoining church, and when his nonjuring conventicle was over, I viſited the ſaid Dean.

"May 20.—We had at the annual feaſt of the Society for Propagating Chriſtian Knowledge, the Biſhop of Chicheſter (Dr. Manningham), the King of Pruſſia's agent, Mr. Nelſon, a moſt uſeful and excellent member, Sir Richard Hoare, and much good Company. I ſat betwixt two friends, Juſtice Chamberlayne, and Mr. Shute the Treaſurer, that made me very eaſy, though moſt of the company, from various parts of England and Wales, were ſtrangers to me. It ſeemed to me like the primitive Agapæ, or Love Feaſts, before corrupted.

"June 29.—Peruſed the original ſubſcription book of the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, to which ſeveral learned and pious divines and gentlemen contribute generouſly, Mr. Nelſon 10*l.*, Mr. Doulins 5*l.* per annum.

"July 1.—Was at the Royal Society, and after, at that for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge; had Mr. Nelſon and Dr. Chamberlayne's company at both.

"July 17.—Walked to Queen Square, to take leave of the celebrated Mr. Nelſon; where I alſo met with Mr. Spinckes, another noted author.

"July 29.—With the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, at their new apartment at Lincoln's Inn, (No. 6, in Searle's Court). After the buſineſs was over, I looked at the curious and noble models of many churches propoſed to be built; this pleaſant room being that where the Commiſſioners meet upon that account in the forenoons (as the Biſhop of London, Mr. Nelſon, &c., did this day) and this Society in the afternoon.

"Sept. 15.—At the Committee with Mr. Nelſon, Mr.

Chamberlayne, and Mr. Lewis, a clergyman from the Eaſt Indies, where he had been a Miſſionary above twenty years; his modeſt account of the ſtate of religion in thoſe parts was very agreeable."

In Nelſon's letters to Mapletoft and Charlett, mention is made of the Reverend Wm. Reeves, Rector of Cranford, and the well-known tranſlator of the early Chriſtian Apologiſts. In the preface to this work,* which was undertaken at the ſuggeſtion of Nelſon, and was dedicated to him, we have a pleaſing, but too highly colored, portrait

* "The Apologies of Juſtin Martyr, Tertullian and Minutius Felix, in defence of the Chriſtian Religion, with the Commonitory of Vincentius Lirinenſis, concerning the Primitive rule of Faith; tranſlated from their originals with notes. Together with a Prefatory Diſcourſe about the right uſe of the Fathers. By William Reeves, M.A. 1709."

A ſimilar work, "The Apologeticks of the learned Athenian Philoſopher Athenagoras; againſt the Sceptics and Infidels of that age. Done into Engliſh with notes by David Humphreys, B.A. London, 1714," was likewiſe dedicated "to Robert Nelſon, Eſq." "Since your having ſo frequently expreſſed a great eſteem for the original was no ſmall encouragement to me to undertake the taſk of giving it this Engliſh dreſs."

Humphreys was Nelſon's perſonal friend, and had his warrant doubtleſs for the dedication. But the advantage of Nelſon's name induced a leſs authoriſed uſe of it by the notorious Curll, which he loſt no time in repudiating, by the following notice in the Spectator (Nov. 5, 1712), and Poſtboy (Nov. 6, 1712). "Advertiſement.—Whereas there hath been lately publiſhed a certain legendary ſtory of an unknown Theodoſius, concerning the Prieſthood of Chriſt, tranſlated out of Suidas, under the title of 'A very ancient, authentic, and remarkable Teſtimony concerning our Bleſſed Lord and Saviour Jeſus Chriſt;' which the Tranſlator hath taken the liberty not only to dedicate to me, but to uſe my name in the title page, thereby giving occaſion to think that I countenance the authority of that teſtimony. Now theſe are to certify, that the perſon who publiſhed that pamphlet is altogether a ſtranger to me, and that I was in no ways acquainted with his deſign till I ſaw it in print; for though the paſſage produced may appear remarkable, yet I cannot think the teſtimony either ancient or authentic.

"Rob. Nelson."

"Nov. 4, 1712."

A ſimilar trick of trade ſeems to lie hid in the following title page, which would appear to claim Nelſon's recommendation for the firſt as well as the ſecond of the two letters ſpecified:

"The Archbiſhop of Cambray's Paſtoral Letter concerning the Love of

of his life and character from the pen of a contemporary admirer and friend.

"No man," ſays he, "certainly has ſtudied the ancients to better purpoſe than yourſelf: you have tranſcribed them in your ſoul: they are the glaſs you dreſs by; and a more beautiful figure, a fairer image of primitive Chriſtianity, is hardly to be hoped for. You write and you live ſo exactly after theſe old ſaints, that I am really at a ſtand which to recommend moſt—the copy or the original; whether you and your works, or them and theirs. . . . . You want, indeed (and bleſſed be God for it), the advantage of their fiery trials to illuſtrate one ſide of your virtue, to make your felicity more blazing. But whether the wind or the ſun, temptations of the rougher or the ſofter kind, have the greater power, is not eaſy to determine; but hiſtory ſeems to ſay that good men have wrapt their religion faſter about them in bad weather, and that proſperity has ſpoiled more Chriſtians than affliction. To you, then, good Sir, I take the liberty of addreſſing theſe diſcourſes, upon no other account but becauſe I know you live the great things in them; and becauſe love has a power of making ſlaves more effectually than intereſt, a captive of which quality I profeſs myſelf to be; and whoever ſhall live but half the time I have done under the enchantments of a converſation ſo wiſe and gracious, ſo inſtructive and beneficent, and every way ſo engaging, will find it hard, extremely hard, to be leſs your ſervant than I am.

"Give me leave likewiſe to remind you, Sir, who it was that propoſed the undertaking, and encouraged it to the end. You gave me the confidence to believe, that by a work of this nature I might do ſome ſervice to the Chriſtian faith and the Chriſtian morals, when ſome moderns were doing their beſt to reform us out of both. . . . . I muſt tell you, Sir, that theſe were your own reaſons for my entering upon theſe tranſlations; and did they but come abroad in

God; together with the opinions of the Fathers on the ſame ſubject. Now done in Engliſh. To which is added a Circular Letter by George Bull, D.D., late Lord Biſhop of St. David's; his Viſitation Sermon and his Charge to his dioceſe. Publiſhed by Robert Nelſon, Eſq. 1715."

that irreſiſtible language they came to me from your own mouth, I ſhould not queſtion their good ſucceſs upon others as well as myſelf; and the doing the leaſt good to others, though out of ſeaſon, I am ſure would be the moſt agreeable obligation I could lay upon yourſelf. . . . Beſides, Sir, I know full well what pain I muſt give you by an epiſtle of this kind, and what taſteleſs things the praiſes of men are eſpecially, in this party-age, to one whoſe converſation is ſo much in heaven; he minds them no more than a traveller does what he hears upon the road, when he is poſt haſte to take poſſeſſion of a vaſt eſtate. And therefore, did I conſult your pleaſure only, I would ſay nothing of you even upon this tempting occaſion, but be as induſtriouſly ſilent as you are of your own charities. But we, particularly we of the clergy, in juſtice to ſuch uncommon virtue, in gratitude to ſo tender a friend and univerſal a benefactor, and in conſideration of the public good, ought not in conſcience to paſs by an example of this kind, but with thankfulneſs to God propoſe it to the imitation of the world, who chooſe to live by example rather than by rule.

"There is a happineſs of conſtitution, which I make bold, in Tertullian's phraſe, to call naturally Chriſtian, and which, as I remember, you uſed to call 'the grace of our mother's bowels;' and excepting thoſe who are ſanctified from the womb, few of the ſons of men ſeem more ſweetly compoſed and turned by nature for Chriſtianity, and to enjoy a greater meaſure of complexional virtue, than yourſelf. The good ſeed of moral Chriſtianity, and the fear of God, was early caſt into the good ground, and has brought forth an hundred-fold. You ſet out for the kingdom of heaven in the morning of life; and, long before the meridian of it, was ſo far advanced in the way of truth, ſo firmly fixed upon the two Vincentian pillars, Scripture and primitive antiquity, that I find you diſputing with doctors at an age when our gentry find ſomething elſe to do with their thoughts than to lay them out upon religion. And for a proof of this, let any one but read your excellent 'Letter to an Engliſh Prieſt of the Roman Communion at Rome,' and he will ſee a combat in ſome reſpect not much unlike that between Goliath and David; an experienced

prieſt vanquiſhed and argued down by one who was but a youth, 'and ruddy, and of a fair countenance;' and though neither the hardneſs of your argument, nor the ſoftneſs of your tongue, could break his bones and bring him over in triumph to the Church of England, yet have they prevailed effectually on others; and a very late convert of yours from popery is an inſtance that arguments are like wedges, which go not well but when they are driven by a gentle hand. And ſuch is the felicity of your temper, that you draw no blood in controverſy; and where you cannot convince, you never gall.

"Having thus early ſecured your principles upon the Catholic foundation, your next care was to live, as well as believe, as the primitive Catholics did; to ſet your affections on things above and not on things on earth; to make God your hope, your joy, your life, your all; to love him with your whole heart and your neighbour as yourſelf; and by continual application to the Throne of Grace, and converſe with the ancient martyrs and confeſſors, you have worked yourſelf up into that holy and habitual flame, as few burn with in ſo clear and conſtant a paſſion, either for God or man. The devotions you have bleſſed the world with beſt ſpeak the abundance of your heart; for who can pray with that heavenly warmth and perfection but one who is always at prayer? Nor can you conceal your alms, notwithſtanding all your pains not to let thy right hand know what thy left hand doth.

"Our miſery is moſtly of our own making. . . . . Nay, one imperious paſſion, like the ſingle thorn in the fleſh, is enough to make a man uneaſy in ſpite of all the enjoyments upon earth.

"Here, then, you began the war betimes, and turned all your philoſophy and religion againſt theſe boſom-enemies, before they had gotten any ſtrongholds in nature; and what a perfect conqueſt you have gained over yourſelf, is wondrous viſible from that perpetual cheerfulneſs and ſerenity which ſhines about you under every condition of life. For the wiſdom of the ſerpent and the innocence of the dove are ſo happily united, that where you cannot pleaſe, you never offend. And who is he that will harm you while you are

ſo prudent a follower of that which is good? Who is he that can find in his heart to harm you, while you are in purſuit only how to clothe the naked, to feed the hungry, to inſtruct the ignorant, and to be a father to the miſerable of all parties? . . .

"The dogs and horſes, the houſes and gardens, with pools of water, with men-ſingers and women-ſingers, and other gratifications of fleſh and blood, which the animal man ſo much dotes on, are ſtrange inſipid things to you, and rather your pity than your pleaſure. The game you hunt after is to do good to the bodies and ſouls of men, to plant nurſeries of religion, and to water them with your own inſtructions, to raiſe up a righteous ſeed for future generations, and to increaſe the kingdom of heaven. And none can think the pleaſure of ſuch a life but thoſe who live it; for there is light and gladneſs ſown for the righteous, which they reap at preſent from every virtuous action, and which increaſes with time, and improves upon enjoyment, and leaves no ungrateful reliſh behind it. Who would not chooſe to enjoy your preſent complacency and raviſhing proſpect, rather than to glitter awhile, and become the gaze and talk of the people; rather than to be ſowing wind and reaping vanity, and, inſtead of doing juſtice and charity, to be treaſuring up the cries of the oppreſſed againſt the day of wrath? But I muſt no longer follow my inclination; and therefore throw away my pen, as the painter in Plutarch did his pencil, in deſpair of finiſhing what I have but rudely begun. The bare relation of your life would be the greateſt panegyric."

With a theological writer of ſtill greater eminence, the Rev. John Johnſon, of Cranbrook, Nelſon was brought into communication by the ſimilarity of their views on the ſubject of the Holy Euchariſt. Johnſon had taught the doctrine of the Euchariſtic ſacrifice in his "Clergyman's Vade Mecum," publiſhed in 1709, and had purſued the ſubject in his "Propitiatory Oblation in the Holy Euchariſt truly ſtated and defended from Scripture and Antiquity,

and the Communion Service of the Church of England," which appeared in 1710. In this little work he replied to the criticiſms on his "Vade Mecum," which Biſhop Trimnel of Norwich, had juſt addreſſed to his clergy in his publiſhed Charge, and he provoked rejoinders from Dr. Wiſe and ſeveral other minor controverſialiſts in behalf of the biſhop. Nelſon read Johnſon's book with unqualified ſatisfaction, and immediately addreſſed a letter of thanks and congratulation to the author, who was then perſonally unknown to him.*

"Reverend Sir,—I have read with great pleaſure your admirable treatiſe, entitled "The Propitiatory Oblation," &c., wherein I think you have placed the Chriſtian ſacrifice in a true light, and have ſecured it by Scripture and primitive antiquity from the vain attempts of thoſe who have ſhewn a great inclination to confound that ancient truth. You have animated your whole performance with ſo much judicious ſpirit, as well as learning, that an impartial reader can be neither tired nor offended; the chaſtiſements of your adverſary fall in ſo naturally, and are ſo well deſerved by him, that it may be reaſonably expected that they ſhould rather correct than provoke him; at leaſt, it is the effect I wiſh they may have upon him. I muſt freely own, that your explanation of the word offertory was entirely new to me, and that you have convinced me that our liturgy uſes it according to your ſenſe of it.† You may judge therefore whether I do not owe you a great many thanks for the freſh light I have received upon this ſubject, and for that ſatisfaction you have given me by your handling of it. I could not ſatisfy myſelf without taking the firſt opportunity

* Taken from the "Life of the late Rev. John Johnſon, Vicar of Cranbrook, by the late Rev. Thos. Brett, L.L.D. Together with three of Mr. Johnſon's Poſthumous Tracts, and an Appendix, containing ſome Letters written to him by the late Rev. Geo. Hickes, D.D., and by Robert Nelſon, Eſq. 1748."

† In the Poſtſcript to the Propitiatory Oblation, Johnſon had given ſufficient proof even from our reformed liturgies, that "offertory" denotes the *ſentences* ſung or ſaid, while the alms and devotions of the people are collected.

of making you my acknowledgments for the great ſervice you have done to the Chriſtian Sacrifice, aſſuring you, that if ever you ſhould think me capable of teſtifying my gratitude by any other ſubſtantial inſtance of my reſpect, you may always freely command me. You muſt prepare yourſelf to meet with great oppoſition in an age which diſtinguiſhes itſelf by a great contempt of eccleſiaſtical antiquity, and that among thoſe who ought to rejoice in it as their great comfort and ſupport; but you ſeem ſo well furniſhed with the ſolid virtues of the Chriſtian life, that I am perſuaded you will always receive the attacks and contradictions of your enemies in the ſpirit of meekneſs, and treat them with the reſpect that is due to their characters. I hope you will pardon this addreſs from one that is a ſtranger to your perſon, when he aſſures you, that your admirable talents are greatly valued by,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your faithful humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"Glouceſter Street, near the Chapel,
"London, Feb. 18, $170\frac{8}{10}$.

"To the Reverend Mr. Johnſon,
Rector of Cranbrook, Kent."

Encouraged by ſuch expreſſions of ſympathy, Johnſon proceeded to unfold and ſupport his views in a larger work, the contents of which will be ſufficiently indicated by its title: "The Unbloody Sacrifice and Altar unveiled and ſupported, in which the nature of the Euchariſt is explained according to the ſentiments of the Chriſtian Church in the four firſt centuries; proving that the Euchariſt is a proper material ſacrifice, that it is both euchariſtic and propitiatory, that it is to be offered by proper officers, that the oblation is to be made on a proper altar, that it is properly conſumed by manducation. To which is added a proof that what our Saviour ſpeaks concerning eating His fleſh and drinking His blood,

in the ſixth chapter of St. John's Goſpel, is principally meant of the Euchariſt." In this elaborate work Johnſon puts himſelf forward as the exponent and champion of the Euchariſtic ſacrifice againſt its aſſailants, only, he ſays, becauſe its more eminent advocates were then incapble of engaging in its defence. "The moſt primitively learned Biſhop Bull," he writes,* "was ſome years ago gathered to his fathers, whoſe doctrine he had ſo nobly followed and defended. Dr. Grabe ſoon followed him. Dr. Hickes, though yet alive, is worn out in the ſervice of primitive Chriſtianity and the ſtudy of antiquities, incapable of turning over books, and of the fatigue of writing or dictating anything that requires long application, and every day expecting his diſſolution. Mr. Nelſon was engaged in writing the 'Life of Biſhop Bull' and publiſhing his works, and wholly employed ſince in works whereby he will merit of the preſent and of future generations. And ſince I could hear of no perſon that was willing to undertake an affair of this nature, I at laſt came to a reſolution of doing it myſelf, though I was ſenſible how inferior I am in all reſpects to the leaſt of thoſe eminent ſervants of God whom I have now mentioned." During the preparation of this work Johnſon was in conſtant communication with Hickes and Nelſon, who modified their opinions on the ſubject in conformity with his. Hickes had taught an oblation of bread and wine before conſecration, as material for the enſuing ſacrament; but Johnſon puſhed the doctrine of the Euchariſtic ſacrifice further than this, and inſiſted that the ancients only practiſed an oblation of the elements after conſecration, as repreſentative of Chriſt's Body and Blood. Nelſon at firſt attempted to perſuade Johnſon to defer to the opinion of Hickes, but eventually joined Hickes in acquieſcing in the authorities which Johnſon alleged. The latter alludes to the amicable diſcuſſion in a

* Vol. i. p. 29. edit. 1847.

preface to a ſubſequent edition of his "Vade Mecum," and concludes—"For the evidence of the truth of the matter of fact as here repreſented, I have Dr. Hickes' letters to ſhew, and I think Mr. Nelſon's too." The two following letters will exhibit Nelſon's intereſt in his work.

"Reverend Sir,—I am ſorry to acquaint you that my worthy neighbour Dean Hickes lies at preſent in a very languiſhing condition, by reaſon of a very painful fit of the ſtrangury, which makes it very doubtful what event his illneſs may have. He was not able to read your letter of the 21ſt, but ſent it to me to anſwer in what terms I ſhould think fit. I am ſure you will be concerned, upon many accounts, for the melancholy reply I am forced to make you, whereby particularly you will be deprived of the aſſiſtance of his maſterly judgment; though I am of the opinion, that few of our divines want it leſs than you do upon the argument you are engaged in. Notwithſtanding the pains of his body are great, yet his mind is perfectly at eaſe, and entirely reſigned to the will of God; do not fail to remember him in your prayers. I was glad to hear my bookſeller had been ſo careful as to convey to you Biſhop Bull's Life, which I am ſure you will read with grains of allowance; pray God enable you to finiſh the noble work you have begun, and that thereby primitive truth may prevail, and flouriſh among us. I recommend myſelf to your prayers, and am with great reſpect,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"March 24, 1712.

"To the Reverend Mr. Johnſon,
At Cranbrook, in Kent."

"Reverend Sir,—You judged very right, in ſuppoſing that the Dean's illneſs prevented your receiving his cor-

rections; I had an opportunity to ſpeak to him this day upon the ſubject of your letter, he deſired me to acquaint you, that the obſervations he had made were very few, and of no great importance, and that you have no reaſon to be concerned that he is diſabled from ſending them; and farther aſſures you, that the care of printing your papers is in very good hands, and hopes you will go on with all imaginable chearfulneſs; he thanks God for that noble parraſia wherewith you are endowed in a ſubject of ſuch importance. . . . . I muſt own, I expect the finiſhing of your treatiſe with a vaſt deal of pleaſure, becauſe it will be a perfect diſcourſe upon the ſubject. I am ſorry to tell you, that I am lately troubled with a pain and heat in my eyes, which I am afraid I have uſed too freely, but I mention it to excuſe any farther enlarging from,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your moſt faithful humble ſervant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"July 7, 1713.

"To the Reverend Mr. John Johnſon,
Rector of Cranbrook, Kent."

The "Unbloody Sacrifice," after long delay, at laſt appeared in 1714, the author not forgetting, both in the prefatory epiſtle to the Biſhop of Norwich, and in the animadverſions on Dr. Wiſe, appended at its cloſe, to rebut the attacks which had been made on his revered friend Robert Nelſon. "Biſhop Taylor," he urges, in one place,* "did the ſame thing which Dr. Hancock charges as a fault on Mr. Nelſon; that is, he brought the notion of a ſacrifice into a book of devotion, I mean, his 'Holy Living and Dying.'" And he exclaims at Dr. Wiſe for ſtriking at "him, whom one may juſtly ſtyle a friend to all good men, and the trueſt fautor and benefactor to true Chriſtianity and

* Vol. i. p. 14.

the clergy of any private gentleman in the whole kingdom; whoſe writings and actions are the faireſt tranſcript of primitive piety that is, I believe, any where to be found in the Chriſtian world; I need not tell my reader Mr. Nelſon is the man. I ſhould value myſelf, if it were in my power to ſay or do anything in his defence upon a juſt occaſion; but what Dr. W. objects of his citing the Rabbins, needs no defence."* Nelſon acknowledged the ſympathy of Johnſon, and the merits of his work in the following letter, written, it will be obſerved, in the laſt year of his life.

"Reverend Sir,—If I have not thanked you ſooner for your valuable preſent of the Unbloody Sacrifice, &c., it is becauſe I had a notion of your attending the Convocation, and thereby expected an opportunity of doing it in perſon; for ſurely I could not be backward to expreſs my great eſteem of an author, whoſe performance has ſtruck out freſh light upon an important doctrine of primitive Chriſtianity, and whoſe great indulgence towards me has placed me in company, that I no ways deſerve to appear in. How far perſons may be affected, who have formed long ago oppoſite notions to thoſe you have laid down concerning the holy myſteries, we may eaſily determine; but ſurely they muſt be very inexcuſable, if they have ſtill aſſurance enough to charge Popery upon the maintainers of this doctrine, after what you have ſaid to take off the force and venom of that objection. Some of our Biſhops are ſo prejudiced, that they will not read what you have with ſo much judgment offered, upon a ſuppoſition that they are maſters of the thing, and of what antiquity has taught as to that point; but their concluſions convince me that they deceive themſelves, and are not likely to grow wiſer if they continue to ſhut out the light. The believers of the Euchariſtical Sacrifice are beholden to you for the enlargement of their foundation, for the growing ſtrength of their evidence, and for weak-

* Vol. ii. p. 362, 3.

ening with such success the batteries of their adversaries; and I question not, but that the rising generation of divines, whose minds have not been infected with modern notions, will entertain such truths as you teach, not with less pleasure than satisfaction. Thus, Sir, the present age are very much obliged to you for such a masterly performance, which posterity will admire, without being able to add any improvements upon a subject, which you seem to have finished as far as you have carried it, and have left us with a strong appetite for what you have given us reason to expect. It is a shame that you should not be distinguished by those in power, as much as you have distinguished yourself by your admirable learning and solid judgment, with a clearness and spirit in your style, which is seldom found in such controversies. I should be extremely pleased to have it in my power to do you any considerable service, and you may depend upon my readiness and zeal, whenever you will put them to the trial, being with great respect and affection,

"Reverend Sir,

"Your most faithful humble servant,

"Rob. Nelson."

"April 3, 1714.

"To the Reverend Mr. John Johnson,
Rector of Cranbrook, Kent."

CHAPTER VII.

NELSON'S CLOSING YEARS.

Nelſon's friendſhip with Bull.—Correſpondence with Boſſuet.—Bull's corruptions of the Romiſh Church.—Nelſon's endeavours for the aſſiſtance of Bowyer.—Letter to Wanley.—Nelſon's portrait of a Country Parſon in his Life of Bull.—He criticiſes Samuel Clarke.—Clarke's 'Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity.'—Nelſon edits Knight's reply.—Nelſon's declining health.—Leaves town for Kenſington.—Entruſts Lee with his 'Addreſs to Perſons of Quality.'—Writes a Preface to the 'Chriſtian Exerciſe.'—Lee's letter of conſolation in his ſickneſs.—A few particulars of his laſt days.—His burial.—His character from Dr. Marſhall's Funeral Diſcourſe.

Of the long and intimate acquaintance that exiſted between Robert Nelſon and Biſhop Bull, but few memorials have come down to us. For the preſervation of the following letter we are indebted to Thoreſby, who obtained it from Nelſon as an autograph of the biſhop.

"Worthy Sir,—I was much troubled when lately I underſtood from my ſiſter Gregory, from Mr. Hanger's family, that you never received any anſwer to your obliging letter, which about a year ago, with two pamphlets you ſent me. I do aſſure you that as ſoon as I could have leiſure curſorily to peruſe thoſe pamphlets, I wrote a brief anſwer to your letter and them, and delivered it to the poſt with my own hand. I directed my letter to be left for you with Madam Nelſon, at her houſe in Throgmorton Street, behind the Old Exchange.

"Of this I thought good to inform you, that you may not think me guilty of ſo much ill-nature and ill-breeding too, as to ſlight ſo worthy a perſon and friend as you are, than whom I ſcarce know any one in the world of whom I

have a greater reſpect, and (if you will admit of that friendly word) love for.

"I have ſent you, together with this, a Latin treatiſe of mine, which I have lately publiſhed, and which I entreat you to accept of. I do not yet know how to direct a letter that it may ſpeedily and certainly come to your hands. If you will give me directions by a line or two, I ſhall very gladly, if you pleaſe, maintain a frequent intercourſe of letters with you. I have been ſome few days in London, and if my occaſions would have permitted, and I could have found you out, I ſhould have been ambitious of preſſing your hand. Indeed, I truly long for an opportunity of ſeeing your face, and will not deſpair of meeting you ſome time or other at Avening, in Glouceſterſhire, where no man living ſhould be more welcome to,

"Sir, your very affectionate and

"Faithful friend and humble ſervant,

"Geo. Bull.

"If you pleaſe at any time to write to me, direct your letter thus:—For Dr. Bull, at Avening, near Tedbury, in Glouceſterſhire."

"Holborn,
"London, Aug. 6, '94."

The Latin Treatiſe mentioned in the foregoing letter was Bull's "Judicium Eccleſiæ Catholicæ," which had juſt been printed at Oxford, and in which he had collected the teſtimonies of the primitive Fathers of the firſt three centuries, in proof of the divinity of our Lord, as a neceſſary article of faith. In addition to its intrinſic value, this work poſſeſſes a peculiar intereſt from its having formed the occaſion of Boſſuet's well-known challenge to the author, and of Bull's reply in his "Corruptions of the Church of Rome." Nelſon, who had received many attentions from Boſſuet when in France, and who ſtill continued on terms

of correſpondence with him, took occaſion a few years later (July 18, 1699) to ſend a copy of the "Judicium" to the celebrated Biſhop of Meaux, who already in his "Variations of the Proteſtant Churches," and in his defence of that work againſt Jurieu, had appealed in the higheſt terms of eulogium to Bull's previous work on the Nicene Creed. Boſſuet appears not to have acknowledged the receipt of Nelſon's letter till the following year. He was then buſily engaged* in aſſiſting at the deliberations of an aſſembly of the Gallican Church, which met at St. Germain's, on 2nd June, 1700, and which (under his guidance) condemned both the Janſeniſt doctrines of grace, and the relaxed principles of morals which were involved in the Jeſuit doctrine of probability. He was at the ſame time brought into frequent communication with the Engliſh court of St. Germain's, being called upon to preach before the exiled king; who told him that he always intended, had he continued on the throne, to invite him to London for conference with the moſt eminent Anglican divines. Boſſuet replied to the king that he would willingly have croſſed the ſea upon ſuch a miſſion; and he would often recur with natural regret to the loſs of ſuch a field for the diſplay of his controverſial powers, ſaying, "qu'il ſe ſeroit flatté de gagner bien des choſes ſur les Anglais, à cauſe du reſpect qu'ils avaient pour la ſainte antiquité." It was under the impulſe of ſuch a feeling that we may ſuppoſe the great controverſialiſt to have thrown out his challenge to the Anglican divine, in the letter of compliment which he now addreſſed to him through their common friend. He had read Bull's work himſelf, and had offered it to the peruſal of ſeveral other prelates who were then at St. Germain's; he had mentioned it ſeemingly in the aſſembly then ſitting, and had received authority to join their congratulations to the author with his own, upon

* Bauſſet, "Hiſtoire de Boſſuet," vol. ii. pp. 329, 354.

the ſervice he had done the whole Catholic Church in ſo well defending her determination of the neceſſity of believing the divinity of the Son of God.

" J'ay receu, Monſieur, depuis quinze jours une lettre, dont vous m'honorez de Blackheath auprès de Londres, le 18 Juillet de l'année paſſée, en m'envoyant un livre du Docteur Bullus, entitulé, 'Judicium Eccleſiæ Catholicæ,' &c. Je vous dirai d'abord, Monſieur, que je reſſentis beaucoup de joie à la veue de voſtre écriture et de voſtre nom, et que je fus ravi de cette marque de voſtre ſouvenir. Quant à l'ouvrage du Docteur Bullus, j'ay voulu le lire entier, avant que de vous en accuſer la reception ; afin de vous en dire mon ſentiment. Il eſt admirable, et la matière qu'il traite ne pouvoit eſtre expliquée plus ſavamment et plus à fond. C'eſt ce que je vous ſupplie de vouloir bien luy faire ſavoir, et en meſme temps les ſincères congratulations de tout le clergé de France aſſemblé en cette ville, pour le ſervice qu'il rend à l'Egliſe Catholique, en défendant ſi bien le jugement qu'elle a porté ſur la néceſſité de croire la divinité du Fils de Dieu.

Qu'il me ſoit permis de luy dire qu'il me reſte un ſeul ſujet d'étonnement. C'eſt qu'un ſi grand homme qui parle ſi bien de l'Egliſe, du ſalut que l'on ne trouve qu'en ſon unité, et de l'aſſiſtance infallible du St. Eſprit dans le Concile de Nicée, ce qui induit la meſme grace pour tous les autres aſſembléz dans la meſme Egliſe, puiſſe demeurer un ſeul moment ſans la reconnoiſtre. Ou bien, Monſieur, qu'il daigne me dire comme à un zélé defenſeur de la doctrine qu'il enſeigne, ce que c'eſt donc qu'il entend par ce mot *Egliſe Catholique?* Eſt-ce l'Egliſe *Romaine*, et celles qui luy adherent? Eſt-ce l'Egliſe *Anglicane?* Eſt-ce un amas confus de ſocietéz ſeparées les unes des autres? Et comment peuvent elles eſtre ce Royaume de J. C. non diviſé en luy-meſme, et qui auſſi ne doit jamais périr? Que je ſerai conſolé d'avoir ſur ce ſujet un mot de reſponce, qui m'explique le ſentiment d'un ſi grave auteur.

Je ſuis très aiſe, Monſieur, d'aprendre dans voſtre lettre l'heureuſe nouvelle de la ſanté de Madame voſtre femme, que je recommande de bon cœur à Dieu, avec vous et

voſtre famille. Ceux qui vous ont raconté les rares talens de M. l'Archeveſque de Paris, aujourd'hui le Cardinal de Noailles, vous ont dit la vérité; il y a long temps que la chaire de St. Dénis n'a eſté ſi dignement remplie. Si M. Collier, dont vous me parlez, a fait quelque écrit Latin ſur la nouvelle ſpiritualité,* vous m'obligerez de me l'envoyer. Mais ſur tout n'oubliez jamais que je ſuis avec beaucoup de ſincérité,

"Monſieur,

"Voſtre très-humble, et très-obéiſſant ſerviteur,

"✠ J. Bénigne, E. de Meaux.

"A Monſieur Monſieur Nelſon, à Blackheath.

"P.S.—En m'écrivant à Paris, Place des Victoires, vos lettres me ſeront portées partout où je pourais eſtre." †

"A St. Germain en Laye, 24 Juil. 1700."

The unuſual compliment, and the perſonal challenge made more ſtir in theological circles in England than it had probably done at St. Germain's. Burnet thought the circumſtance remarkable enough for ſpecial mention in the "Hiſtory of his own Time," and ſpeaks of Bull's "Judicium" as the "learnedeſt treatiſe that this age has produced of the doctrines of the Primitive Church concerning the Trinity," and as "ſo well received all Europe over, that in an aſſembly general of the clergy of France, the Biſhop of Meaux was deſired to write over to a correſpondent he had in London, that they had ſuch a ſenſe of the ſervice he had done their common faith, that upon it they ſent him their particular thanks. I read the letter, and ſo can deliver it for a certain truth, how uncommon ſoever it may

* A reference, apparently, to the myſticism of his antagoniſt, Fenelon.

† Endorſed in Nelſon's handwriting, "To Robert Nelſon, Eſq.—Biſhop of Meaux, 24th July, 1700. Anſwered $\frac{2}{12}$ Oct., 1701." This celebrated letter of Boſſuet to Nelſon, written in the round and large but unſteady hand of age, is now in the Britiſh Muſeum. Birch MSS. 4277. 38.

seem to be." * Being thus handed about in private circles, an imperfect abstract of Bossuet's letter got printed in a newspaper of the day,† and the public impatiently waited for Bull's reply, which his failing health probably delayed. The earliest rejoinder was consequently made by the Rev. Ed. Stephens, ‡ formerly Bull's near neighbour and friend, when a country squire in Gloucestershire, but at this time a nonjuring clergyman in the vicinity of London, and an indefatigable theological pamphleteer. The celebrated Charles Leslie drew up another reply in his "True Notion of the Catholic Church." Bishop Bull's elaborate answer was not completed till 1704, when it was sent in MS. to Nelson, just about the time that he received the news of Bossuet's death. Nelson had still continued to correspond with his distinguished friend, and a letter is extant, dated "Feb. 23, 1703.—Dans la Rue d'Ormond, à Londres," and commencing—

"Monseigneur,—Vous voulez bien que, pour profiter de l'occasion qui se presente du Rev. Père Fontanée, je prenne la liberté de vous escrire, et pour vous assurer de mes très humble respects, et de vous prier en meſme temps de me conserver toujours quelque place dans l'honneur de votre amitié."

Père Fontanée, he proceeds to say, will give an account of his reception in England, which appears to have been such as was due to his merit, but "vous scavez bien que nous n'avons pas trop de respect pour les Pères de la Société." § He begs Bossuet's acceptance of a copy of Bull's Latin works just edited, in a collected form, by Grabe. And he concludes—

* Burnet's "History of his own Time," vol. v. p. 115. edit. 1823.

† "The Postboy," No. 1280.

‡ "The wonder of the Bishop of Meaux upon the perusal of Dr. Bull's Book considered and answered." Anon. n. d. (1703 ?). See Hearne's "Reliquiæ," pp. 59—64 for an account of Stephens and a list of his writings, in which, however, the above tract is omitted.

§ i. e. The Jesuit Society.

"Entre les autres malheurs de la guerre, it faut conter la perte que nous faiſons des beaux livres, qui ſont publiés dans les autres pais; may, pleut à Dieu, que nous ne pouvions pas nous plaindre des choſes de plus grande conſequence, la libertinage s'introduit par tout, *inter arma ſilent leges*. Vous m'obligerez beaucoup de me faire ſcavoir ſi Monſieur l'Archevêque de Cambray a publié ſon Télémaque après ſa diſgrace ou devant; cette circonſtance ſe fera juger differemment de cet ouvrage là. Je ſuis avec un profond reſpect,

"Monſeigneur,

"Votre très-humble, &c.,

"De Nelson."

Boſſuet died in the following year, and Bull's reply to his challenge remained conſequently in Nelſon's hands till 1705, when it was publiſhed by Dr. Hickes in his firſt volume of "Controverſial Letters," in company with Leſlie's "Reply to the ſame queries of the Biſhop of Meaux," and Nelſon's "Letter to a Prieſt of the Engliſh Communion at Rome." In this celebrated tract, Bull retorts with ſpirit upon the wonder Boſſuet profeſſed:—

"*I* cannot but very much wonder at *it*, eſpecially at the reaſons on which it is grounded. He wonders how I, that ſpeak ſo advantageouſly of the Church, &c., can continue a moment without acknowledging her. Her! what her doth the biſhop mean? Doubtleſs the preſent Church of Rome, in the communion whereof he himſelf lives, and to which his deſign ſeems to be to invite me. But where do I ſpeak ſo advantageouſly of the preſent Church of Rome? Nowhere, I am ſure. Of the Catholic Church of the three firſt centuries I do, indeed, ſpeak with great deference. To her judgment, next to the Holy Scriptures, I appeal againſt the oppugners of our Lord's divinity. The rule of faith, the ſymbols or creeds, the profeſſion of which was then made the condition of communion with the Catholic Church, I heartily and firmly

believe. This primitive Catholic Church, as to her government and diſcipline, her doctrines of faith, and her worſhip of God, I think ought to be the ſtandard by which we are to judge of the orthodoxy and purity of all other ſucceeding Churches. According to this rule, the Church of England will be found the beſt and pureſt Church at this day in the Chriſtian world. Upon which account I bleſs God that I was born, baptized and bred up in her communion, wherein I firmly reſolve by His grace to perſiſt, *uſque ad extremum vitæ ſpiritum*. But the preſent Church of Rome hath far departed from this primitive pattern.

"Monſieur de Meaux adds, as a farther reaſon of his wonder, that I ſpeak of ſalvation as only to be found in unity with her. Her! Doth the Biſhop here again mean the preſent Church of Rome? If he doth, I muſt plainly tell him, that I am ſo far from ever thinking that ſalvation is only to be found in unity with her, that on the contrary, I verily believe, they are in great danger of their ſalvation who live in her communion, that is, who own her erroneous doctrines, and join in her corrupt worſhip. I do, indeed, in the book, which the Biſhop hath an eye unto, ſhow that there was a canon or rule of faith received in the primitive Church, which whoſoever perſiſted to oppoſe was caſt out of the communion of the Church, and ſo out of the ordinary way of ſalvation. But what is this to the preſent Church of Rome and her communion?

"The biſhop's laſt reaſon is, that I own the infallible aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt in the Council of Nice, which infers the ſame aſſiſtance for all others aſſembled in the ſame church. To which I anſwer, I mention this indeed as the opinion of Socrates, but at the ſame time I give another account of the credit that is to be given to the Nicene Council in the article of our Saviour's divinity; viz. that it is incredible that ſo many holy and approved men, aſſembled from all parts of the Chriſtian world, ſhould be ignorant of the firſt and fundamental doctrine of the Holy Trinity, or of what themſelves had received from their predeceſſors concerning it, or ſhould wickedly conſpire among themſelves to new model the faith received in the Church, concerning this principal article of Chriſtianity.

"But ſuppoſing I were fully of Socrates' opinion concerning the infallible aſſiſtance of the Holy Ghoſt attending every truly general council in matters of faith, I ſhould be never the nearer to the communion of the Church of Rome as it is now ſubjected to the decrees of Trent. For the aſſembly at Trent is to be called by any other name, rather than that of a general council.

"I proceed to the biſhop's queſtions. He aſks me what I mean by the Catholic Church? I anſwer, by the Catholic Church I mean the Church univerſal, being a collection of all the Churches throughout the world, who retain the faith once delivered to the ſaints, that is, who hold and profeſs in the ſubſtance of it that faith and religion which was delivered by the Apoſtles of Chriſt to the firſt original Churches; which faith and religion is contained in the Holy Scriptures, eſpecially of the New Teſtament, and the main fundamentals of it compriſed in the canon or rule of faith univerſally received throughout the primitive churches. All the churches at this day which hold and profeſs this faith and religion, however diſtant in place or diſtinguiſhed by different rites and ceremonies, yea, or divided in ſome extra-fundamental points of doctrine, yet agreeing in the eſſentials of the Chriſtian religion, make up together one Chriſtian Catholic Church under the Lord Chriſt, the ſupreme head thereof.

"This Catholic Church, I believe ſhall never fail; that is, Chriſtianity ſhall never utterly periſh from the face of the earth, but there ſhall be ſome to maintain and uphold it to the end of the world. But I know of no promiſe of indefectability from the faith made to any particular Church, no, not to the Church of Rome itſelf. And if we may judge by the Holy Scriptures and by the doctrine and practice of the primitive Catholic Church, the preſent Church of Rome hath already lamentably failed, and fallen into many dangerous and groſs errors. She hath quite altered the primitive eccleſiaſtical government, changed the primitive canon or rule of faith, and miſerably corrupted the primitive liturgy or form of divine worſhip."*

* Abridged from the original.

Bull was at this time ſeventy years of age, and did not ſuſtain more than three or four years the burden of the epiſcopal office, which was now laid upon him. Upon his deceaſe (Feb. 17, 1709) Nelſon was requeſted by his ſon to undertake a memoir of the life and writings of his venerable friend; and the preparation of this biography occupied his time for the three following years. He put the laſt ſtroke to his work on Dec. 31, 1712; but its publication was a little longer delayed by a diſaſtrous fire at his friend Bowyer's,* by which a few ſheets of it were deſtroyed, and among them unfortunately ſome critical obſervations of Dr. Hickes, which his illneſs did not permit him to rewrite.

By this conflagration Bowyer's printing-houſe in Dogwell Court, Whitefriars, was entirely conſumed, and his loſs amounted to upwards of 4000*l.* His misfortune excited a general ſympathy; the bookſellers and printers raiſed a ſubſcription in his behalf, a royal brief (according to the faſhion of the day) was obtained in his favour, which brought him nearly 1400*l.*, and his private friends exerted themſelves warmly in his cauſe. Among them, writes Nichols,† Bowyer's apprentice, ſon-in-law, and ſucceſſor, "the good, the pious Mr. Nelſon found here an ample field for the exerciſe of his munificence and friendſhip. He had a peculiar regard for Mr. Bowyer, who had regularly

* "Evening Poſt," Feb. 13, 1712, 13—

"Whereas by the violence of a ſudden fire on Friday the 29th day of January laſt, the printing-office of Mr. W. Bowyer in White Friars, was burned to the ground, this is to acquaint the world, that part of the impreſſion of Biſhop Bull's 'Important Points of Primitive Chriſtianity maintained and defended in ſeveral ſermons, and other diſcourſes, to which is prefixed the hiſtory of his life by Robert Nelſon, Eſq.,' was conſumed in the flames. By which misfortune we are obliged to defer the publication of Biſhop Bull's Important Points till the laſt ſheets are reprinted, which we hope will be in a fortnight's time. London, printed for Richard Smith, at the ſign of Biſhop Beveridge's Head, in Paternoſter Row near Cheapſide; and in the fore walk of Exeter Change, in the Strand."

† "Anecdotes of Bowyer," p. 3.

uſhered his valuable productions into the world, and in the period of his diſtreſs not only gave largely himſelf, but exerted his endeavours ſucceſsfully in ſoliciting the affluent and great, among thoſe it would be unpardonable not to mention the Earl of Thanet, Lord Viſcount Weymouth, and Lord Guildford." The Lord Chief Juſtice Parker was another perſon of diſtinction whom Nelſon intereſted in his friend's misfortune, as appears from the following letter to Wanley :—

"Mr. Wanley,—Pray do me the favour to write out the Saxon characters for Mr. Bowyer*, as you have kindly promiſed; deſpatch in this affair is of great conſequence, becauſe my Lord Chief-Juſtice Parker does intend to aſſiſt towards repairing his misfortunes by giving him a ſet of thoſe letters, and is very uneaſy he is not ready to print his friend's book, which requires thoſe characters to perfect it. You will oblige me much by your kindneſs to Mr. Bowyer, and I ſhall be ready to make you any acknowledgment. I have been confined near a month by the gout, but am now upon recovering.

"I am, Sir,

"Your affectionate ſervant,

"Robert Nelson."

"May 19, 1713."

Before the preceding date, Bowyer had been able to complete Nelſon's "Life of Bull" with the Sermons and Diſcourſes to which it was prefixed, which made their appearance in 4 vols. 8vo. before the end of 1712.† In this

* "I did what is required underneath," wrote Wanley at the top of Nelſon's letter, "in the moſt able and exact manner that I could in all reſpects. But it ſignified little, for when the alphabet came into the hands of the workman, who was but a blunderer, he could not imitate the fine and regular ſtroke of the pen; ſo that the letters were not only clumſy but unlike thoſe I drew. This appears by Mrs. Elſtob's Saxon Grammar being the book mentioned by Mr. Nelſon."

† "Some Important Points of Chriſtianity maintained and defended in ſeveral Sermons and Diſcourſes, by Geo. Bull, D.D., late Lord Biſhop of St. David's.

biographical ſketch we have Nelſon's Portrait of a Country Parſon ; the ſtandard of duty which it ſupplies, not riſing above a level which is attainable by moſt clergymen, and the circumſtances of Bull's miniſtry being preciſely ſuch as ſurround the rural paſtor at the preſent day. Bull is deſcribed as preaching twice every Sunday to his little flock ; his diſcourſes being familiar expoſitions of Holy Scripture, from notes that he previouſly prepared, ſpoken with a becoming fervour and decency of geſture, and with ſome vehemency of voice, whereby he kept his audience awake and raiſed their attention to what he delivered. He had to perſuade a ſet of prejudiced pariſhioners to bring their children to public baptiſm, which they had not been uſed to do for many years before, and to return thanks to God after childbirth, which had been diſcontinued for ſome time in that pariſh. He not only heard the youth repeat the words of our excellent catechiſm, but expounded to them the meaning of it, in a plain and familiar manner, and had ſuch good ſucceſs in his inſtructions as to carry fifty perſons at a time to be confirmed at Cirenceſter. He gave notice duly of all the Holy-days of the Church, and took his houſehold with him on thoſe days to the public ſervice. He took great pains to perſuade his pariſhioners to a better obſervance of Good Friday, and always preached the ſermon himſelf on that day to bring them together. At Avening he had a ſervice in his church every Thurſday, and in his cure at Briſtol, he would pitch upon ſome week-day before he adminiſtered the Holy Euchariſt, to inſtruct the younger ſort in the nature and deſign of the Chriſtian ſacrifice. He did not content himſelf with theſe public miniſtrations, or with going to the ſick, when their condition required ſpiritual

To which is prefixed the hiſtory of his life and of thoſe controverſies in which he was engaged. By Robert Nelſon, Eſq. 1713."

assistance; but he used to visit all his parishioners, rich and poor, without distinction at their own houses, in a certain compass of time, not to trifle away an hour in empty talk, but to be serviceable to them as their exigencies required, in the salvation of their souls. And when in the course of such visits, he came upon separatists from the Church, his constant practice was to inquire the name of the parties who had seduced them, and to challenge them to a conference on the subject in debate; and he had thereby great success in recovering his wandering sheep.

To this portrait of his ancient friend in the capacity of a rural parish priest, Nelson added a synopsis of his different Theological Works, such as to argue no superficial acquaintance with the controversies in which Bull had been engaged.* In giving an account of his Exposition of the doctrine of the Holy Trinity in his "Defensio Fidei Nicænæ," he took occasion to complain of the artful and unfair use which had been made of Bull's citations by Dr. Samuel Clarke, in his "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity," and of his attempts to wrest them in favour of the Arian scheme. In this notorious work † Clarke had ventured to affirm, that the word "God" in Scripture never signifies a complex notion of three Persons in one Godhead; that it merely means the person of the

* Nelson had previously been engaged in friendly controversy with Whiston, on his Arian heterodoxies. Whiston, it seems, when expelled from Cambridge in 1710, withdrew voluntarily from the S.P.C.K., sending such a letter upon the occasion, (he says) "as Mr. Nelson, one of the best of all our members, as I have been told, greatly approved of." Nelson had endeavoured to reclaim him by a letter, to which Whiston replied with characteristic self-confidence. "I heartily thank you for your good wishes and prayers for me, as supposing me running into a dangerous heresy, and nothing can be more charitable or Christian than what you do upon that supposition; but, &c."—*Memoirs of Whiston*, pp. 174. seqq. 1749.

† "The Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity. In Three Parts. Wherein all the texts in the New Testament relating to that Doctrine and the principal passages in the Liturgy of the Church of England, are collected, compared, and explained. By Samuel Clarke, D.D. 1712."

Father and ſometimes the perſon of the Son; that the Holy Ghoſt is never called God in Scripture; that the reaſon why the Son is called God, is not ſo much on account of his eſſential Divinity, as of his relative authority over us; that when Scripture ſpeaks of One God, it does not predict unity of ſubſtance, but merely coincidence of will and power between the Father and the Son; that abſolute ſupreme honor is due to the perſon of the Father only, and that to Him only ſhould our prayers and praiſes be primarily or ultimately directed. Theſe heterodox ſentiments upon the myſtery of the Holy Trinity, Clarke attempted in this work to eſtabliſh from Holy Scripture and to reconcile with the formularies of our Church. Of their actual irreconcileability with the devotions of our Prayer-book, he himſelf ſupplied a notable proof,* by omitting the celebration of the Holy Communion on Trinity Sunday, in order to avoid uſing the proper preface for the day and pronouncing the emphatic aſſertion of the orthodox doctrine which it contains. The avowal of ſuch principles by one holding the important cure of St. James's, Weſtminſter, excited a general indignation and alarm. His book received a variety of replies; from Dr. Edwards, the veteran champion of Calviniſtic Orthodoxy, on whatever ſide it was aſſailed, from Dr. Wells of Coteſbach, Nelſon's correſpondent and admirer, from Dr. Gaſtrell, his friend Mapletoft's ſon-in-law, from Mr. James Knight, afterwards Vicar of St. Sepulchre's, and from Robert Nelſon himſelf, who took a leading and a reſpected part in the controverſy which enſued.

Clarke had endeavoured to fortify his doctrine of the eſſential inferiority of the Son to the Father, by Bull's

* "Hiſtorical Memoirs of the Life of Dr. Samuel Clarke. By W. Whiſton. 1730." p. 67.

aſſertion of His ſubordinate relation, and Nelſon felt himſelf called upon in his "Life of Bull" to vindicate the biſhop's memory, and to expoſe the unfairneſs of Clarke's citations. "Almoſt all of them," he ſays, "are repreſented in a very different view from that which our author certainly had in writing thoſe paſſages; as are alſo the citations out of the Fathers themſelves, which Dr. Clarke here met with, and hath accommodated to his own purpoſe, without ſo much as the leaſt notice taken of the explications and anſwers given to them by this our author." * Next year (Nov. 16, 1713), Nelſon reſumed the controverſy by a letter to Dr. Clarke, which he prefixed to an anonymous Vindication of the Doctrine of the Holy Trinity, † written by Knight. In this letter, he proteſts againſt the non-natural ſenſe by which the Arian divine ſought to explain away the formularies of the Church. "If the Judges, and others learned in the law ſhall follow the ſame method of interpreting the laws of the land, as you have taken in interpreting and accommodating the ſenſe of the Church in her moſt authentic forms and declarations before God and man, and of the venerable Fathers of the Catholic Church, there are many of the opinion, that everything might eaſily be leaped over and that no eſtabliſhment could be ſo ſtrong as to laſt long." ‡ And he declares him "not to have repreſented the true Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity; but to have ſubſtituted in its room another of your own; againſt the true Apoſtolical tradition of that doctrine, and the common interpretation of the Scriptures throughout all the ages of the Church of Chriſt." The work of Knight,

* "Life of Bull," p. 322.

† "The Scripture Doctrine of the Moſt Holy and Undivided Trinity vindicated from the miſinterpretations of Dr. Clarke. To which is prefixed a Letter to the Reverend Doctor. By Robert Nelſon, Eſq. 1714."

‡ p. xxi.

which Nelſon endorſed in this prefatory letter, has been deſcribed (by Van Mildert) "as a learned, acute, and well-digeſted performance, written with candour and good temper, and Dr. Clarke put forth his full ſtrength in anſwering it." His anſwer * appeared in the following year, in the form of a letter to Nelſon, "whoſe remarks," he ſays, "are written with ſo much candour and civility, with ſo much fairneſs and temper, that they may well become an example to clergymen and others of writing controverſy in ſuch a manner, as that truth may by weighing arguments on both ſides be fully ſearched after, and our common Chriſtianity ſuffer nothing in the mean time through want of meekneſs and charity." Nelſon prepared a reply to this letter of Dr. Clarke, which was to have been prefixed to Knight's rejoinder,† and which he was only prevented from completing by his declining health. The advocates of Orthodoxy, however, could not afford to relinquiſh the advantage of his authority, and his honored name, after his deceaſe, ſtill continued to appear upon the title-page of the contending diſputants, as the reſpected champion of the doctrines of the Church.‡

* "A Reply to the Objections of Robert Nelſon, Eſq., and of an anonymous author, againſt Dr. Clarke's Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity. 1714."

† "The True Scripture Doctrine of the Moſt Holy and Undivided Trinity, continued and vindicated from the miſrepreſentations of Dr. Clarke. In anſwer to his Reply. By the author of the 'Scripture Doctrine' publiſhed and recommended by Robert Nelſon, Eſq. 1715."

‡ "Some brief Critical Remarks on Dr. Clarke's laſt Papers, which are his 'Reply to Mr. Nelſon,' and an anonymous writer, and to the author of 'Some Conſiderations,' &c. By John Edwards, D.D. 1714." The writer ſays, "he has baulked the expectation of his friends and made good Mr. Nelſon's obſervation of him, 'that he hath an artful way of citing authors and books.'"

"A Diſcourſe ſhowing that the Expoſition, which the Ante-Nicene Fathers have given of the Text, alleged againſt the Reverend Dr. Clarke, by a learned layman (Mr. Nelſon), are more agreeable to the interpretations of Dr. Clarke than to the interpretations of that learned layman. 1714."

"A Letter to the Rev. Dr. Wells, in anſwer to his Remarks, &c. By Samuel Clarke, D.D., 1714." The writer retorts upon Nelſon, and augurs the

His contentions for the faith, and his labours of charity were now alike drawing to their earthly cloſe. In October, 1714, being now in the 59th year of his age, he found his ſtrength rapidly declining under an attack of aſthma and dropſy on the heart, and he was adviſed by his phyſicians to have recourſe to the purer air of Kenſington, then commonly recommended for conſumptive and other invalids. He prepared accordingly to releaſe himſelf from the charitable and religious engagements which had hitherto occupied his time. He begged his friend Sir Marmaduke Wyvill to take his place as Treaſurer and Chairman of St. George's Veſtry. He ſent back to Dr. Wells (Oct. 14,) the MS. of his "Duty of Church Building," with a kindly letter of approval; taking the opportunity to intereſt his friend in the diſtribution of Bibles and Common Prayer Books among the Epiſcopalians of Scotland, and noticing the meaſures which had been taken, that that good work ſhould not ſink by the death of the Queen. He returned to Mr. Theobald (Pope's Antagoniſt), a tranſlation of Nowell's Catechiſm, which had been ſent to him four months before for his approval. He wrote a farewell letter (Oct. 28,) to his Aſſociates at the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge. While to his friend Lee, he committed the MS. of his "Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate," which

ultimate triumph of his doctrines, as follows, "I ſhall conclude the whole with ſetting before you, as in a glaſs, a lively and exact picture of the different ſpirits of men, in the words of a perſon as heartily zealous for the authority and traditions of the Church as any learned proteſtant in Chriſtendom. It is the ingenious Robert Nelſon, Eſq. in his 'Life of the Right Reverend Biſhop Bull,' ſpeaking concerning the Biſhop's explication of the doctrine of juſtification, which is now as univerſally received and followed as it was then, contrary to the general opinion of divines."

"A Letter to the author of a book entitled 'The True Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity continued and vindicated, recommended firſt by Mr. Nelſon, and ſince by Dr. Waterland.' By Samuel Clarke, D.D. 1719."

Compare alſo "Waterland's Works," vol. iii. p. 164., vol. ii. p. 290.

he now foreſaw he ſhould not be able himſelf to complete as he had propoſed.

"About the latter end of laſt autumn," writes Lee, "finding his health to decline apace, and being adviſed, by his phyſicians, to retire from the town, for the benefit of the air, immediately before his departure, and after he had been for ſeveral hours fatigued with a great deal of company, taking their leave of him; he called to me in the laſt place, and kindly embracing me in the preſence of God, and as the greateſt pledge he could give me of his moſt Chriſtian affection and ſincere confidence, delivered to me the manuſcript written all with his own hand, (which I keep by me as a moſt precious depoſitum) from a copy of which, the following Addreſs, with the reflections thereupon, is here printed: and then requeſted me to conſider the whole well, and after that to do therewith as ſhould appear beſt."

At Kenſington he took up his reſidence with his couſin, Mrs. Delicia Woolf, daughter of Sir Gabriel Roberts; a lady to whoſe houſe he would not have repaired for religious ſympathy, ſhe being a ſtaunch Non-conformiſt, and ultimately giving away her hand and fortune to a young diſſenting miniſter * whom ſhe had entertained as her chaplain; but whoſe attention to him in this his laſt illneſs Nelſon thankfully acknowledged in his will, by bequeathing to her the copyright of his "Feſtivals and Faſts." His illneſs was but of three months' duration, and of its circumſtances we have only the ſcantieſt record. We get a glimpſe of him on one occaſion riding in the Park in his chariot, in company with his eccentric friend Lee, gazing together with him upon a glorious ſun as it burſt from behind a cloud, and accepting it for an emblem of the eternal brightneſs that ſhould ſhortly break upon him. At the beginning of November he was well enough to complete an "Addreſs to

* Dr. Obadiah Hughes, who thus became poſſeſſed of ſome of Nelſon's papers. See Birch's Life of Tillotſon, pp. 67, 91.

the True Lovers of Devotion," which he prefixed to Lee's "Chriſtian's Exerciſe."* He called it his "dying addreſs," and we have in it ſome of his laſt thoughts upon religion, tinctured with the myſtical theology with which his friend was ſo deeply imbued, and which Nelſon here pronounces to be "the moſt perfect eſſence of the Chriſtian religion, which ſome have not unfitly called the kingdom of God in the ſoul." "I muſt own," he concludes, "I had propoſed to myſelf a larger ſcheme for this addreſs, but the wiſe providence of God hath viſited me with an illneſs, which maketh thinking and writing irkſome and grievous to me. But I deſire entirely to ſubmit to the will of God; and humbly beg your moſt devout prayers for me upon this occaſion, and more particularly for my ſpiritual improvement under this diſpenſation, which will lay a particular obligation upon me." This is dated from Kenſington, November 3rd, 1714. On the 14th of the month we find Lee addreſſing a letter † of Chriſtian conſolation to him as

"My dear Friend and the Gift of God to me,—This day, my dear friend, I heard it ſounded in the leſſon, 'Lord, he whom thou loveſt is ſick.' Thus, thus prayeth my ſoul. And, oh! that I could but now hear the voice of our Jeſus, ſounding alſo this gracious anſwer, 'This ſickneſs is not unto death!' Be comforted, be comforted, dear Sir; for as you have been a comforter to many under God, ſo much comfort remaineth for you, both here and hereafter, when your warfare ſhall be accompliſhed; all theſe will undoubtedly be for the glory of God, what lieth ſo much at your heart. . . . . This I may be certain of, that all this is for your greater purification, and that the Son of God will be glorified by you in it, even as

* "The Chriſtian's Exerciſe, or Rules to live above the World while we are in it. In Four Parts. By Thomas-à-Kempis. Addreſſed to all the true lovers of devotion, by Robert Nelſon, Eſq. To which is added a Prayer which Mr. Nelſon made for his own private uſe. And a letter wrote by Archbiſhop Tillotſon to his ſick friend. 1715." 2nd edition. 1717.

† "Notes and Materials for an Adequate Biography of Wm. Law. By C. Walton. 1854." p. 251.

you deſire He ſhould be glorified. You are now, therefore, called to make a ſacrifice of all to Him, and if at any time you have been pleaſed with the good you have been an inſtrument of by grace, or with the applauſe you may have received for it by men of goodwill, or may unwarily have taken part of the glory to yourſelf; now you are to caſt all at the feet of Jeſus, that ſo alone He may have the glory.

"To whom, dear Sir, I always commit you, with moſt affectionate ſympathy of heart, yours in that friendſhip and ſervice which hath no end,

"FRANCIS LEE.

"To the beſt of friends from the moſt affectionate of friends."

It is intereſting to be thus aſſured that he who had haſtened to the deathbed of his friend Tillotſon, and held him in his arms when he expired, and who watched for ſix months over the decaying ſtrength of Kettlewell, was not himſelf "left to die alone;" that at leaſt one affectionate friend was there, ready to adminiſter the conſolations which thoſe who have been moſt familiar with themſelves, are then moſt thankful to be aſſured of by other lips; and that on the pious and charitable Robert Nelſon's end there did not fail to reſt the bleſſing of the Pſalmiſt, "Bleſſed is he that conſidereth the poor and needy; the Lord ſhall deliver him in the time of trouble. The Lord comfort him, when he lieth ſick upon his bed; make thou all his bed in his ſickneſs." "Hence he derived," ſays his friend Marſhall, "that admirable calm and patience, that firm affiance in the mercies of God through Chriſt Jeſus, that full aſſurance of hope in his promiſes, which ſupported him under the weakneſs and preſſures of a lingering obſtinate diſtemper, and ſweetened to him at laſt the very bitterneſs of death itſelf."*

But Nelſon was ſoon to paſs beyond the reach of ſick bed trials or comforts. On Dec. 11, it was well known

* Funeral Diſcourſe.

that he was dying.* On the 18th he made his will, in which, after kindly remembrances to his relatives, he bequeathed the bulk of his eſtate to charitable uſes. "Thus he *ended*, as he had all along *ſpent*, his days; was the ſame perſon ſtill; maintaining the ſame character, and carrying it with him to the place of refreſhment." † He lay at the laſt ſeveral hours ſpeechleſs, perfectly compoſed, taking no nouriſhment, and ſhowing no ſigns of life, except that it was juſt perceptible that he continued to breathe. And on the 16th of January, this good man's ſoul paſſed away quietly into peace. "He died, as he had lived, like a lamb, without commotion or ſtruggle, ſubmiſſive to the will of God, and entirely reſigned to His holy providence." ‡

His remains were removed to his own houſe in Glouceſter Street, § from which they were carried to St. George's Chapel adjacent, where he had ſo conſtantly worſhipped, and were finally interred (as requeſted in his will) in the new burial-ground belonging to it in Lamb's Conduit Fields, which was conſecrated for the occaſion by Dr. Biſſe, the Biſhop of Hereford, Biſhop Compton of London chancing to be indiſpoſed. His motive for ſelecting this graveyard for his interment was a deſire to overcome the averſion which

* "Kennett's MSS. Collections," vol. xvi. p. 473. "Dec. 11, 1714. It is aid that Mr. Nelſon at the Gravelpits at Kenſington is paſt all hope of recovery."

† Marſhall's Funeral Diſcourſe.

‡ *Ibid.* Amid our natural anxiety to recover ſome of this good man's dying words, it is diſappointing to meet with the ſolitary particular that, "About four in the afternoon, the day preceding his death, he ſuddenly put back the curtain, raiſed his head, and uttered the following ſentence: 'There is a very great fire in London this night,' then cloſed his eyes and lay ſome hours as before."—*Preface to Monck Berkeley's Poems*, p. 448.

§ "Regiſtrum Sepultorum in Cæmeterio Sti Georgii Martyris. Anno Domini 1714. Jan. 28. Robert Nelſon, Eſq., of Glouceſter-ſtreet, Vir Inſignis." Parochial tradition points to the houſe in Glouceſter-ſtreet immediately adjoining St. George's Church, and now known as No. 44, Queen Square, as the houſe from which Nelſon was buried. He ſeems to have removed from the larger manſion in Ormond-ſtreet after his wife's death.

had been diſcovered for its uſe; and his condeſcenſion to vulgar prejudice ſoon had the wiſhed-for effect, and it was then accounted an honour to be buried by his ſide.* The ſpot where his venerated form was laid is ſituate on the left-hand ſide, immediately within the old entrance from Gray's Inn Road, and is marked by a large ſquare monument,† in the faſhion of the time, on the four ſides of which is an eulogiſtic epitaph from the pen of his friend Smallridge. All exceſs of funereal pomp Nelſon had ſtrictly prohibited; nor did his executors (by his deſire) give any encouragement to the then uſual compliment of a funeral ſermon,‡ which his friend Dr. Marſhall

* Thus Hearne's "Reliquiæ," p. 865, "Mar. 16, 1735: Dr. Hanbury, who died on the 27th paſt, and was buried near Mr. Nelſon in new burying-ground of St. George's pariſh, has left £100 to the Nonjuring clergy."

And Nichols' "Lit. Anec.," vol. iii. p. 193. "Mr. Charles Dilly was buried on the 12th May, 1807, in the cemetery of St. George the Martyr, Queen Square, in a grave nearly adjoining that in which the famous Robert Nelſon was depoſited."

† Twenty years ago, the remains of this monument were doomed to unworthy demolition in the following advertiſement:—

ST. GEORGE THE MARTYR, Middleſex.—Whereas ſeveral Tombs and Monuments in the Burial Ground of this Pariſh, ſituate at the back of the Foundling Hoſpital, bearing the undermentioned names, are in a ſtate of complete dilapidation, notice is hereby given that unleſs the repreſentatives of the ſeveral families, or thoſe claiming the right to the TOMBS, do put them into decent repair within the ſpace of three calendar months from the date hereof, they will be REMOVED.—Dated this 10th day of May, 1839.

WILLIAM SHORT, Rector.
FRANCIS WARR, } Church-
PEREGRINE FERNANDEZ, } wardens.

At the head of the liſt is the name of "Robert Nelſon, 1714." The Church of England was ſaved from the contemplated diſgrace by the Veſtry of St. George's who (at the ſuggeſtion of the churchwardens) were at the expenſe of reſtoring the monument preciſely to its original ſtate.

‡ "A Sermon preached in the chappel of Ormond-ſtreet on Sunday the 6th of February, 1714, upon occaſion of the much lamented death of that pious and worthy gentleman, Robert Nelſon, Eſq. Publiſhed at the requeſt of the Truſtees of the ſaid chapel, by J. Marſhall, LL.D., and morning preacher of the ſame. Prov. x. 7. The memory of the Juſt is Bleſſed. London, 1714."

Extract from Minute Book of St. George's Chapel, Feb. 15, 1714: "The Truſtees having taken particular notice of the excellent ſermon preached by Dr. Marſhall on Sunday the 6th day of February inſtant, wherein he did in a

nevertheleſs thought proper to deliver on the following Sunday.

"I enter upon the province," writes Marſhall, "unaſked and uninvited. The modeſty of our departed friend, which caſt a diſtinguiſhed luſtre upon numberleſs other virtues, carried him to his grave in privacy and ſilence; nor were the perſons intruſted with the care of his obſequies at liberty to adorn them with proper honours. They have performed the part incumbent on them, and have conſigned his mortal remains to the place whereunto he bequeathed them, and in the manner which he had requeſted of them.

"Yet I may well preſume, that even his modeſty itſelf would here give way, upon the ſuggeſtion that any good would probably be done by the blazoning his virtues, ſince this was a motive which he never could withſtand; it was equally the buſineſs and pleaſure of his life, and is therefore the fitter to attend him at his death. . . . . .

"I can have no end to ſerve by flattering his memory; nor do I fear the imputation of it, in a caſe where all the difficulty will be to ſay enough. For in the duties of godlineſs, how aſſiduous he was and fervent, how uniform and conſtant, how ſerious and unaffected, you are all my witneſſes; and will join with me in this teſtimony of him, that we know not where either our religion or our place of worſhip hath a brighter ornament left to either.

"His conſtant attendance at the euchariſtical ſacrifice, his exemplary and reverend behaviour there, was ſo very edifying and conſpicuous, as helped to warm many cold and lukewarm hearts, and to inflame them with a like ſpirit of true and fervent piety.

"Religion ſeemed, indeed, and doubtleſs was, the care of his life; it grew, it flouriſhed obſervably, under the happy influence of his pious endeavours, and his engaging practice.

very pathetical manner recommend the example of Mr. Nelſon, lately deceaſed, to be imitated by the audience, and the Truſtees being deſirous as well to have ſo uſeful a diſcourſe made public, as to do all the honor they can to Mr. Nelſon's memory, do therefore deſire Dr. Marſhall that he will be pleaſed to print the ſaid ſermon."

"His learning, large as it was and various, was ſet apart for the ſervice of the altar, and ſanctified to religious uſes. And many a pious ſoul breathes daily to God its holy aſpirations of prayer and praiſe, in the language of his heart and tongue. . . . . .

"He was zealous for his God, and for the honour of His ſervice; and therefore only preferred, above others, the Church of England, becauſe here he thought that honour beſt conſulted. He underſtood, by due inquiry, that ſhe was the moſt conformable, both in doctrine and government, to the model once and firſt 'delivered to the ſaints.' For neither his faith nor his practice proceeded upon truſt, but upon a reaſonable choice. He had, as much as any, proved, examined, conſidered all things; was able to ſatisfy himſelf, and to give a reaſon to others, of the hope which was in him; and where once he fixed, he fixed upon ſo good a foundation, that he was not eaſily removed from it by any wind of doctrine; but having rightly apprehended, he ever held faſt that which was good. . . . . .

"Either nature or grace had bleſſed him with ſuch a flowing courteſy of mind and manners, that few provocations could break in upon or diſconcert it. Zealous as he was (and ſurely no man was more, or more truly ſo) for the honour of his God, he was never thence tranſported to any undue excurſions againſt man.

"No man converſed more generally than he with all perſwaſions, and no man more inoffenſively, nor therefore with more likelyhood of recommending to all men the doctrine of his God and Saviour. Whenever the aſſaults of hereſy obliged him to appear in defence of the faith, and to contend for the truth as it is in Jeſus, as perſonal reſpects were beſide the queſtion, he candidly threw them out of it.

"A rare example this, to our angry writers upon diſputed ſubjects; who think it not enough to confute an adverſary without confounding him; and have not learned from his Chriſtian practice the happy ſecret of diſtinguiſhing between the perſon and the error. . . . . .

"But, above all, his works of mercy, his labours of love, theſe were his darling, his beſt-beloved employments. The poor, the fatherleſs, and the widow, will never enough

lament his irreparable loſs. The ſocieties which have been lately formed for various purpoſes of piety and charity will miſs in him a faithful counſellor, a prudent director, an able manager, and every way accompliſhed for the glorious and godlike work of doing good.

"Many expences in life, which feed the vices and vanities of others, he prudently cut off as ſuperfluous, that he might have the more to give to ſuch as needed.

"His frugality was no cover to avaricious purpoſes, but all his œconomy was deſigned to make room for charity; which he did not ſo much reſerve for bequeſts at his death, as like a wiſe and a good ſteward he was a liberal diſpenſer of it in his life. Pompous he would be in neither, that in both he might be more uſeful. . . . . .

"No man ever advanced the character of a private gentleman to a more elevated pitch than he; in him the gentleman and the Chriſtian were ſo happily united, he did ſo adorn religion, and was ſo adorned by it, that the riſing generation may hence with great advantage obſerve, how perfectly conſiſtent theſe characters are, and how much they may both be depreciated by a neglect of their common duties. . .

"And now that we are going to offer up to God the great and ſolemn ſacrifice of thankſgiving, we may not improperly mix with it our peculiar praiſes to His holy name, for all the glories of His grace which ſo eminently ſhone forth in this His faithful ſervant.

"Exemplary virtues had this encouragement in the primitive Church, that the names of ſuch as were eminent for the practice of them, were remembered with honour in her moſt ſolemn offices.

"In our moſt ſolemn offices, the devotions of many are doubtleſs here and elſewhere aſſiſted by the pious labours of our departed friend. So that when we are praiſing God for all his ſervants departed this life in his faith and fear, this eminent ſervant of God may well deſerve from us a more ſpecial commemoration.*

* An office of Commemoration on the anniverſary of Robert Nelſon's deceaſe has been found among the papers of his friend Francis Lee, and is printed by Mr. C. Walton in his intereſting and valuable "Notes and Materials for an adequate Biography of William Law," pp. 248, et seqq. n.

"At the ſame time let us beſeech the Father of Mercies that He would give us His grace ſo to follow both this, and every other good example, that we may all at length have an happy meeting in that other and better world, where with angels and archangels, with this our deceaſed friend and brother, with the general aſſembly of God's elect, and all the ſpirits of juſt men made perfect, we may laud and magnify His glorious name, evermore praiſing Him, and ſaying, Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.

"To whom be glory and dominion, both now and for evermore. Amen."

It commences as follows:—"A Commemoration. Jan. 16. R. N., of bleſſed memory, my familiar Friend and Brother. The Righteous ſhall be had in everlaſting remembrance. Pſalms 41, 42, 112, 116. Leſſons, Wiſdom iv, 10, to ver. 17. St. John v. 29, 30." Its general tone will be indicated by the following prayer: "Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon all faithful ſouls, and more particularly upon all who have been confeſſors among us for truth and righteouſneſs, eſpecially this our dear brother, thy ſervant, and the delight of my ſoul, and let the cry both of him and of all the other ſouls lying under the heavenly altar, with the ſeal of faith, together with the prayers of all the dead Iſraelites, from the faithful Abraham down to this day, come up before thee and be accepted; that thy long expected kingdom may come ſpeedily, and that thy glory may dwell upon the earth."

APPENDIX.

No. I.

THE Will of Robert Nelſon; extracted from the Regiſtry of the Prerogative Court of Canterbury.*

"In the name of God, Amen. I, ROBERT NELSON, of the pariſh of St. Andrew's, Holborn, in the county of Middleſex, Eſq., being infirm in body, but of ſound mind and underſtanding, doe make this my laſt will and teſtament, in manner and form following: I recommend my ſoul, that precious and immortal part of me, into the moſt merciful hands of God, hoping for the pardon of all my many and great ſins, and for the inconceivable bleſſing of eternal life, through the merits of my bleſſed Saviour, and only Redeemer, Jeſus Chriſt, who out of His abundant love to mankind came into the world to ſave ſinners; and grant, O Lord, that whatever defylements it may have contracted in the midſt of this miſerable and naughty world, through the luſts of the fleſh, or the wiles of Satan, being purged and done away by the blood of that immaculate Lamb, that was ſlain to take away the ſins of the world, it may be preſented pure and without ſpot before Thee at the laſt day, when all the world ſhall be ſumon'd before the great tribunal; and the Lord have mercy upon me in that day. I deſire my body may beprivately interr'd of in the cemetery of St. George the

* This will was printed by Curll, immediately after Robert Nelſon' deceaſe.

Martyr, being now part of the ſaid pariſh of St. Andrew's, Holborn; but if that ſhall not be conſecrated at the time of my death, then my will is that my body may be buried in the church-yard of the pariſh of Cranford, in the ſaid County of Middleſex, at the eaſt end of the church, in a moſt comfortable hope of a happy reſurrection, life, and immortality, being brought to light through the Goſpel. And as touching the diſpoſition of ſuch temporal eſtate as God in His great mercy has bleſſed me with, I give and diſpoſe thereof as followeth, vizt.: I deſire that all my juſt debts and funeral expences ſhall be firſt paid and ſatisfied. And then I give and bequeath the following ſumes to charitable uſes, as an humble acknowledgment of God's great bounty to me through the whole courſe of my life. I give and bequeath to the Reverend Dean Hicks, now living in Ormond Street, in the ſaid county of Middleſex, and to the Reverend Mr. Nathaniel Spinks, the ſume of two hundred pounds, upon truſt that they diſtribute the ſame among ſuch neceſſitous clergymen as they ſhall think the moſt proper objects of ſuch charity. I give and bequeath to the Corporation Society for Propagating the Goſpel in Foreign Parts one hundred pounds. I give and bequeath to Mr. Henry Hoare, of London, goldſmith, one of my executors hereinafter named, two hundred pounds, upon truſt to diſtribute one hundred pounds, part thereof, in ſuch manner as ſhall be directed by the Society for Promoting Chriſtian Knowledge, of which I have been many years an unworthy member, and the other one hundred pounds to be employed by him in promoting parochial libraryes. I give and bequeath to Sion College, in the city of London, twenty pounds, to be laid out in ſuch books as the preſident and the deans of the colledge for the time being ſhall direct. I give and bequeath to the ſaid Mr. Henry Hoare, and to

Mr. Benjamin Wyche, five hundred pounds in truſt, nevertheleſs for the ſole uſe and benefit of Miſs Mary Lucy, only daughter of Sir Berkeley Lucy, Barronet, to be paid to her at her day of marriage, or age of one-and-twenty years, which ſhall firſt happen. And my will and pleaſure is, that the ſaid Henry Hoare and Benjamin Wyche put out the ſame upon ſome mortgage, or other good parliamentary ſecurity, and that the profit or intereſt ariſing therefrom be received and kept by them for the ſole uſe and benefit of the ſaid Mary Lucy, but not to be paid to her till the day of her marriage, or her age of one-and-twenty years, which ſhall firſt happen; and in caſe the ſaid Mary Lucy ſhall die before ſhe is married,* or ſhall attain the age of one-and-twenty years, then my will and pleaſure is, that the ſaid ſume of five hundred pounds, and the intereſt thereof ariſing, be paid by the ſaid Henry Hoare and Benjamin Wyche to the ſaid Sir Berkeley Lucy, Barronet, to whom I give and bequeath the ſaid five hundred pounds, and all the intereſt and profitts that ſhall ariſe therefrom. And my will and meaning is, that the ſaid Henry Hoare and Benjamin Wyche ſhall not be anſwerable for any ſume, or ſumes of money, to be placed out at intereſt by them upon the truſts aforeſaid, with the conſent of the parties concerned. I give and bequeath to my moſt valuable friend, as well as dear relation, my uncle Sir Gabriel Roberts, two hundred pounds; I give and bequeath to my dear couſin, Mrs. Delitiæ Woolfe, three hundred pounds; and in caſe my uncle, Sir Gabriel Roberts, ſhall dye before me, then my will and pleaſure is, that the legacy of two hundred pounds which I have left him be paid to my ſaid couſin, Mrs. Delitiæ Woolfe, his daughter. And I doe moreover bequeath to my ſaid couſin, Delitiæ Woolfe, the pictures

* She was married to Hon. C. Compton, youngeſt ſon of George, 4th Earl of Northampton.

of my father and mother, and the picture of her father, and of my own, drawn by Sir Godfrey Kneller. And alſo I give to my ſaid couſin Delitiæ Woolfe, the pearl necklace which was formerly my mother's. And I likewiſe give and bequeath unto my ſaid couſin, Delitiæ Woolfe, all my intereſt which I now, or ſhall hereafter have in the agreement I have made with Mr. Churchill, in relating to his printing a book entitled "The Feaſts and Faſts," with buffs in folio, which is upon condition that the ſaid Mr. Churchill be at all the expences, and that I am to have one-half part of the clear profits, which, by eſtimation, will, as it is thought, amount to five hundred pounds. I give and bequeath unto my ſaid worthy friend Sir Berkeley Lucy and his lady one hundred pounds for mourning. And I alſo give and bequeath to the ſaid Lady Lucy the croſs ſet with diamonds which my wife uſually wore. I give and bequeath unto Sir William Ingoldſby and his Lady Ingoldſby her mother's pictures, in little in a caſe.* I give and bequeath unto Mrs. Elizabeth Ingoldſby two hundred pounds, and alſo my gold pick-tooth caſe. I give and bequeath to George Hanger, Eſq., at Smyrna, the ſume of four hundred pounds. I give and bequeath unto Mr. Nicholas Bigſby, linen draper in Fleet Street, London,† one hundred pounds. I give and bequeath to Mr. Auguſtine Armſtrong one hundred pounds, which I deſire him to keep for and give to his daughter. Item; I give and bequeath to my worthy friend, the ſaid Dean Hicks, ſeventy pounds. I give and bequeath to the ſaid Mr. Nathaniel Spinks one hundred pounds. I give and bequeath to Theophilus

* Sir Wm. Ingoldſby had married Miſs Theophila Lucy, Nelſon's ſtepdaughter.

† Apparently a relation of Nelſon by his father's ſide. Mr. John Nelſon in his will, bequeaths to two of his ſiſter's children, "John and Nelſon Bigſbee, £400 a-piece, with which I would have them well brought up, and placed prentices with ſome good Turkie merchants."

Lucy, Eſq., the diamond ring I uſually wear, and my ſilver ſhaveing baſon and waſh-ball caſe, and little ſilver pott for hott water, which belongs to it. And whereas I have, in the cuſtody of Mrs. Jane Kettlewell, a challice, patin, and plate, all ſilver, for the uſe of the Holy Communion, now I do hereby give and bequeath the ſaid chalice, patin, and plate to the miniſter and churchwardens for the time being of the pariſh of Dryfield, in the county of Glouceſter, for the uſe of the pariſh church aforeſaid.* I give and bequeath to my worthy friend, the ſaid Mrs. Jane Kettlewell, her huſband's picture and five guineas for a legacy. I give and bequeath to the Right Reverend the Lord Biſhop of Briſtoll,† lord almoner, the Madonna of Corregio, with the frame belonging to it, and which hangs on one ſide the chimney in my dining-room, as a ſmall teſtimony of that great value and reſpect I bear to his lordſhip. I give and bequeath to Mrs. Fowler, daughter of James Chadwick, deceaſed, the two pictures given to me by her grandmother, Mrs. Tillotſon, the one of her mother, Mrs. Chadwick, and the other of her aunt, Mrs. Elizabeth Tillotſon, with the two black frames thereunto appertaining. I give and bequeath my books and pictures not otherwiſe diſpoſed off, to the ſaid Sir Berkeley Lucy, Barronet. I give and bequeath to Mr. David Humphryes,‡ St. Chriſoſtome's Works in eleven volumes, and Poole's "Synopſis," in five volumes. I give and bequeath to the Reverend Dr. Lupton, all the volumes of Rymer's "Fœdera," and alſo the following pictures and frames, viz.—that of Dr. Hicks, that of Father Paul, that of Rubens, that of Vandike, that of Petrarcha, and that of Gallileo, which are ſix heads, in my ſtudy. I give and bequeath to Mrs. Jane Bonnell, a ſilver cupp and cover, with Indian flowers, given me by

* See p. 6. † Dr. Smallridge. ‡ See p. 242, n.

my wife's father, the Earl of Berkeley. I give and bequeath to Mrs. Jane Hoare, wife of the ſaid Mr. Henry Hoare, two pair of little ſilver candleſticks for her cloſet. I give and bequeath to Edward Jennings, Eſq., the ſilver candleſtick with two branches. I give and bequeath fifty pounds for the uſe and benefit of the charity-ſchools of St. George the Martyr aforeſaid, to be paid to the treaſurer of the ſaid ſchools. I give and bequeath unto my good friend Mr. John Skeate, ten pounds to buy a ring in remembrance of me; I give and bequeath fifty pounds to Dr. Francis Lea, to be paid out of the ſurplus of my eſtate, if any ſhall be. And whereas I have ſeveral books printed with my name as being the author thereof, viz., "The Companion for the Feaſts and Faſts," "The Great Duty of Frequenting the Chriſtian Sacrifice," &c., "The Life of Biſhop Bull," &c., in which copies I have the ſole right and property; and whereas I have a book printed without my name, called "The Practice of True Devotion in relation to the end, as well as meanes of religion," in which book I have alſo the ſole property, as appears by articles of agreement with bookſellers which have printed any impreſſions of the before-mentioned books; and I doe hereby declare my will and pleaſure to be, that the before-mentioned copies ſhall be diſpoſed of by my executors hereinafter-named to ſome eminent bookſellers or dealers who uſe the trade of ſelling books, provided always that the ſaid copies be ſold or diſpoſed of to ſuch perſons as have already printed them, if they ſhall ſeverally give what ſhall be judged a reaſonable and fair price for the ſame. I give and bequeath to all my ſervants as ſhall be living with me at the time of my deceaſe, one year's wages, according to their ſeveral ſalaries or wages over, and beſides what ſhall be ſeverally due to them at the time of my deceaſe. I give and bequeath to my ſervant Richard James, all my wearing

apparel, both linnen and woollen, of what nature or kind ſoever, at the time of my deceaſe. I give and bequeath to John Sidgley, my coachman, my chariot, and horſes belonging to it. I give and bequeath unto my loving friends, Sir George Hanger, of Dryfield, in the county of Glouceſter, knight, and the ſaid Mr. Henry Hoare, and to each of them, the ſume of one hundred pounds. I alſo give and deviſe unto the ſaid Henry Hoare, my picture, being the Madonna of Andrea del Sarto, which hangs in my parlor, with the frame that belongs to it. All the reſt and reſidue of my eſtate, of what nature or kind ſoever, I give and deviſe the ſame, and every part thereof, unto the ſaid Sir George Hanger and Mr. Henry Hoare, whom I make full and ſole executors of this my laſt will and teſtament, upon ſpecial truſt and confidence, that after my juſt debts, funeral expences, and the other legacies hereinbefore by me given and bequeathed, ſhall be fully paid and ſatisfied, they, my ſaid executors, ſhall apply and diſpoſe of the ſame, and every part thereof, to ſuch charitable uſes and purpoſes as they, the ſaid Sir George Hanger and Henry Hoare, or the ſurvivor of them, or the executors or adminiſtrators of ſuch ſurvivor, ſhall think moſt needful and proper. And I doe hereby revoke all former wills by me heretofore made, and declare this to be my only laſt will and teſtament. In witneſs whereof I, the ſaid Robert Nelſon, have hereunto ſet my hand and ſeal this eighteenth day of December, in the year of our Lord one thouſand ſeaven hundred and fourteen.

"Rob. Nelson."

"Signed, ſealed, publiſhed, and declared by the ſaid Robert Nelſon to be his laſt will and teſtament, which is contained in three ſheets of paper, in the preſence of us

who have ſubſcribed our names as witneſſes, in the preſence, and at the requeſt, of the ſaid teſtator,

"C. Sill,
"Nath. Parsley,
"Randolph Greenway."

"*To Sir George Hanger, knight, and Mr. Henry Hoare, Executors of my laſt will and teſtament.*

"I deſire that out of the ſurpluſage of my eſtate, that you will pay to the Rev. Mr. Dean Hicks twenty pounds per annum during his natural life, and alſo that you will apply the ſume of thirty pounds, or thereabout, in placing out Mary Applewhite* in ſome advantageous way for her to get her livelihood. As witneſs my hand this 1ſt day of January, 1714.

"Rob. Nelson."

"I doe alſo farther deſire that you give to my good friend, Mrs. Jane Bonnell, the ſalver with Indian figures that belongs to the cup and cover I have given her by my will, and alſo to give her four ſilver ſpoons, and four ſilver forks, and four ſilver knives, of them I have by me. And I alſo deſire you will give to the Reverend Dr. Marſhall ten guineas, in regard of his conſtant attendance at the Euchariſtical Sacrifice; and that you will alſo give to the Reverend Mr. Burſcough† five guineas. And I alſo deſire that the Reverend Mr. Spinks may be diſcharged from all intereſt that ſhall be due from him without his paying for the ſame; and, if there is occaſion, I deſire that what is writt on this ſide of this paper may be annexed as a codicil

* Daughter apparently of the Aunt Applewhite mentioned p. 21, his father's ſiſter.

† Lecturer at St. George's Chapel, Ormond-ſtreet.

to my laſt will and teſtament. As witneſs my hand this 2 day of January, 1714.

"Rob. Nelson."

"January the 25, 1714-15.

"Appeared perſonally, John Skeat, of the St. Botolph, Aldgate, London, armourer-brazier, and John Nottingham, of the pariſh of St. Dunſtan Weſt, London, and by virtue of their corporal oaths, ſeverally depoſed as followeth, viz., That they knew and were well acquainted with the character and manner of writing of Robert Nelſon, Eſq., deceaſed, having often ſeen him write; and having carefully viewed the name Robert Nelſon ſubſcribed to the paper or codicil hereunto annexed, beginning thus, 'To Sir George Hanger, Knight,' &c., and ending thus, 'As witneſs my hand this 2 day of January, 1714,' do verily believe, that the name 'Robert Nelſon' ſubſcribed or written in two ſeveral places thereof, is written with the proper handwriting of the ſaid Robert Nelſon.

"John Skeat,
"John Nottingham."

"Die prædict. dicti Johannes Skeat et Johannes Nottingham jurati fuere de veritate præmiſſorum coram me.

"Hum. Henchman, Surr.

"Probatum fuit hujuſmodi teſtamentum apud London (cum duodus codicillis annexis) coram ven^li^ et egregio viro Johanne Betteſworth, legum doctore curiæ Prærogativæ Cantuar. magiſtro cuſtode ſive commiſſario legitime conſtituto 2d February, 1714, juramentis domini Georgii Hanger, militis, et Henrici Hoare, armigeri, executorum in dicto teſtamento nominatorum, quibus commiſſa fuit

adminiſtratio omnium et ſingulorum bonorum, jurium, et creditorum dicti defuncti, de bene et fideliter adminiſtrando eadem ad Sancta D^mi^ Evangelia jurat. &c.

"CHARLES DYNELEY,
JOHN IGGULDEN,
W. F. GOSTLING,
} Deputy Remembrancers.

No. II.

A complete liſt of Robert Nelſon's writings.

1. Tranſubſtantiation contrary to Scripture; or, the Proteſtant's Anſwer to the Seeker's Requeſt. 1688. Anon.

2. The Practice of True Devotion, in relation to the end as well as the means of Religion; with an Office for the Holy Communion. 1698. Anon.

3. An earneſt exhortation to Houſekeepers to ſet up the worſhip of God in their Families. With daily Prayers for Morning and Evening. The ſecond edition. 1702. Anon.

4. A Companion for the Feſtivals and Faſts of the Church of England, with Collects and Prayers for each ſolemnity. 1704.

5. The Whole Duty of a Chriſtian, by way of Queſtion and Anſwer, exactly purſuant to the method of "The Whole Duty of Man," and deſigned for the uſe of the Charity Schools in and about London. 1704. Anon.

6. The Neceſſity of Church Communion vindicated from the ſcandalous aſperſions of a late Pamphlett, entitled, "The Principles of the Proteſtant Reformation explained, in a Letter of Reſolution, concerning Church Communion." Humbly offered to the conſideration of the Right Reverend and the Reverend Clergy aſſembled in Convocation. 1705. Anon.

7. A Letter to an Engliſh Prieſt of the Roman Communion at Rome. 1705.

8. The Great Duty of frequenting the Chriſtian Sacrifice, and the Nature of the Preparation required, with ſuitable Devotions, partly collected from the Ancient Liturgies. 1706.

9. Inſtructions for them that come to be Confirmed, by way of Queſtion and Anſwer. 1706 (perhaps earlier).

10. The Life of Dr. George Bull, late Lord Biſhop of St. David's, with the Hiſtory of thoſe Controverſies in which he was engaged; and an Abſtract of thoſe Fundamental Doctrines which he maintained and defended in the Latin tongue. By Robert Nelſon, Eſq. 1712.

11. An Addreſs to Perſons of Quality and Eſtate: by Robert Nelſon, Eſq. To which is added an Appendix of ſome original and valuable Papers. 1715.

The following prefaces were alſo written by him:—

A Preface, wherein the Author's Character is attempted; prefixed to Kettlewell's "Five Diſcourſes." 1695.

An Advertiſement to the Reader, prefixed to Kettlewell's "Office for Priſoners." 1696.

A Preface prefixed to Kettlewell's "Letter to a Friend on the Great Evil and Danger of Profuſeneſs." 1704.

A Prefatory notice, prefixed to the third edition of Kettlewell's "Practical Believer." 1712.

A Letter to the Reverend Dr. Clarke, Rector of St. James's, Weſtminſter, prefixed to Knight's "Scripture Doctrine of the Trinity." 1714.

An Addreſs to the True Lovers of Devotion, prefixed to "The Chriſtian's Exerciſe." 1715.

No. III.

"A prayer which Mr. Nelſon made for his own private uſe," printed in the Appendix to the "Chriſtian's Exerciſe."

"Grant, O God, that I may not live at random, without any aim or deſign at all; but that I may propoſe ſuch ends as are important and material, and proportion my care to the weight of things; that ſince Thou haſt endowed me with an immortal ſoul, I may apply my moſt ſerious thoughts to work out my ſalvation with fear and trembling.

"Make me ſenſible, O thou Chiefeſt Good, of the ſmall moment of any intereſt that relates purely to this world, by reaſon of the ſhortneſs and uncertainty of my abode here upon earth; our life is but a ſhadow, and no man can lengthen out his days beyond that natural term, which is ſet him by his conſtitution; but how far and how many ways he may fall ſhort of that compaſs, depends upon ſo many hidden cauſes, and ſo many little accidents, that it may be reckoned among the greateſt of uncertainties.

"Grant, therefore, that this conſideration may depretiate and vilifie all the entertainments of this animal life, and may call off my care from the objects of ſecular happineſs; that ſince I walk in a vain ſhadow, I may not diſquiet myſelf alſo in vain, nor be greedy in heaping up riches, ſince I cannot tell who ſhall gather them; that I may not trouble myſelf by aiming at greatneſs, ſince the ſcene of life will be quickly paſt, and the actors muſt all retire into a ſtate of equality; that I may not be earneſt in the purſuit of fame, ſince I muſt ſhortly die, and thoſe that moſt admire me; that I may not drudge too laborioufly in the proſecution of learning, ſince death makes no difference, and we know not of what importance it may be to the happineſs of another life; that I may uſe this world as not abuſing it, ſince the faſhion of it paſſes away.

"Grant that I may employ my faculties in that work Thou haſt aſſigned them, that I may fight the good fight, and deſtroy the whole body of ſin; that I may mortifie my paſſions, and purifie my affections; acquire virtuous and holy diſpoſitions, obtain heaven and avoid hell. Let this be my great concern, and let my principal care and diligence be employed about it.

"Make me ſenſible, O God, of the vaſt and infinite moment of it; no leſs than eternal happineſs, or eternal miſery depends upon it. Let me often conſider how bitter it will be, to be for ever excluded from the beatifick preſence of God, and to be full of deſire and full of deſpair, without other relief than lamenting my folly and miſery to eternal ages; and who is able to dwell with the everlaſting burnings?

"Teach me to remember, that more than ordinary care is neceſſary to ſecure eternal happineſs; and though we are inſtated into a capacity of pardon and reconciliation by the death of Chriſt, 'tis not our immediate and actual diſcharge from ſin, makes me careful to perform the conditions he

requires, the neglect of which will make my condemnation more intolerable. Let me remember that ſtrait is the gate, and narrow is the way, that leadeth to life; and that fleſh and bloud cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

"Let me always be upon my guard againſt thoſe potent and malicious enemies that are confederates againſt me. Make me ſober and vigilant, becauſe our adverſary, the devil, walks about as a roaring lyon, ſeeking whom he may devour.

"Let me be mindful that I have but a little time for this great work, which is very precarious and uncertain; make me therefore extreamly concerned to improve this ſhort, this uncertain opportunity, this only time of probation, to work with all my might, while 'tis day, before the night comes, when no man can work.

"Deliver me, moſt gracious God, from the folly of neglecting this grand concern, of being more intent upon this world than the next; but that I may wiſely and prudently withdraw myſelf, as much as poſſible, from the noiſe, hurry, and buſineſs of this world, and apply myſelf more intirely to a life of devotion and religion; to lay aſide every weight, that I may be ſurer to win the great prize, and ſo to run as to obtain: grant this for the merits of thy dear Son Jeſus, my only mediator and advocate.—Amen, Amen, Amen."

No. IV.

Epitaph on Robert Nelſon's tomb, written by Biſhop Smallridge :—

H. S. E.

ROBERTUS NELSON, *Armiger*,

Qui,

Patre ortus *Johanne* Cive Londinenſi,
Ex Societate Mercatorum cum Turcis commercium
Habentium,
Matre *Deliciis* Sorore *Gabrielis Roberts* Equitis aurati,
Ex eadem civitate & eodem Sodalitio,
Uxorem habuit Honoratiſſimam Dominam
Theophilam Lucy,
*Kingsmanni** *Lucy* Baronnetti viduam,
Prænobilis *Johannis*† Comitis de BERKELEY filiam,
Quam Aquiſgranum uſque valetudinis recuperandæ cauſa
Proficiſcentem
Lubenter comitatus,
Ad extremum vitæ terminum ſummo amore fovit,
Morte divulſam
Per novem annos ſuperſtes plurimum deſideravit.
Literis Græcis & Latinis,
Quas partim in Schola Paulina,
Partim intra domeſticos parietes didicerat,
Linguarum Gallicæ & Italicæ peritiam
Lutetiæ & Romæ agens facilè adjunxit.

* An error for Kingſmilli. † An error for Georgii.

In omni ferè Literarum genere verſatus,
Ad Theologiæ ſtudium animum præcipuè appulit.
Et felici pariter memoriâ atque acri judicio pollens,
Antiquitatum Eccleſiaſticarum ſcientiâ
Inter Clericos enituit Laicus.
Peragratâ ſemel atque iterum Europâ,
Poſtquam diverſas Civitatum
Et Religionum formas exploraverat,
Nullam Reipublicæ adminiſtrandæ rationem
Monarchiæ domi conſtitutæ præpoſuit,
Cæteras omnes Eccleſias Anglicanæ longe poſthabuit,
Hanc ipſi ſemper caram
Beneficiis auxit,
Vitâ exornavit,
Scriptis defendit ;
Filius ipſius obſequentiſſimus,
Et propugnator imprimis ſtrenuus.
Nulla erat bonorum Virorum communitas,
Aut ad pauperum liberos ſumptu Locupletiorum
Bene inſtruendos,
Aut ad augendam utilitatem publicam,
Aut ad promovendam Dei gloriam inſtituta,
Cui non ſe libenter ſocium addidit.

Hiſce ſtudiis & temporis & opum
Partem longé maximam impendit.
Quicquid Facultatum ſupererat,
Id ferè omne ſupremis tabulis
In eoſdem uſus legavit.
Dum id ſibi negotii unicè dedit, Deo ut placeret,
Severam interim Chriſtianæ Religionis,
Ad qu m ſe compoſuit, diſciplinam
Suaviſſima morum facilitate ita temperavit,
Ut hominibus perraro diſpliceret :
In illo enim, ſi in alio quopiam mortalium,

Forma ipſa Honeſti mirè elucebat,
Et amorem omnium facilè excitabat.
Cum Naturæ ſatis & Gloriæ,
Bonis omnibus & Eccleſiæ
Parum diu vixiſſet,
Fatali Aſthmate correptus
Kenſingtoniæ animam Deo reddidit,
Vitæ jam actæ recordatione lætus,
Et futuræ ſpei plenus.
Dum Chriſtianum Sacrificium rite celebrabitur,
Apud Sanctæ Cœnæ participes,
Nelsoni vigebit memoria.
Dum ſolennia recurrent Feſta & Jejunia,
Nelsoni Faſtos jugiter revolvent Pii:
Illum habebunt inter Hymnos & Preces,
Illum inter ſacra gaudia & ſuſpiria
Comitem pariter & adjutorem.
Vivit adhuc, & in omne ævum vivet,
Vir pius, ſimplex, candidus, urbanus:
Adhuc in Scriptis poſt mortem editis,
Et nunquam morituris,
Cum nobilibus & locupletibus miſcet colloquia;
Adhuc eos ſermonibus
Multa pietate & eruditione refertis
Delectare pergit & inſtruere.
Ob. 16. Jan. Ao. Dom. 1714.
Ætat. ſuæ 59.

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